# THE EXPOSITORY TIMES

## Notes of Recent Exposition

Of the making of many books about St. Paul there is no end. That is not surprising. All realize that for early Christianity and the Christianity of all ages St. Paul stands supreme next to Jesus Himself. All down the ages students have been perplexed about St. Paul. What he wrote to the primitive churches is of primary importance for Christian theology, but St. Paul was no systematic theologian. Hence the bewildering diversity of view as to what the Apostle really taught. Hence in consequence successive attempts to make systematic what St. Paul wrote in Letters most of which were written under pressure of the peculiar situations in which he found himself or the community addressed found itself.

A notable contribution to Pauline literature is offered by the Rev. W. D. Stacey in *The Pauline View of Man*.[1] One of his points made early in the book is rather startling. It is that popular Christianity to-day contradicts St. Paul and falls back on ancient Greek thought. To Greek philosophers the 'soul' (*psyche*) was all important. It was for the immortality of the 'soul' that Plato argued. And Christian evangelism is constantly speaking and labouring for the salvation of 'souls.' In popular thought likewise it is the soul for which an immortal destiny is prepared. To Greek thought the body was a regrettable prison of the 'soul'; and we sing 'here in the body pent.' Now all that is not Pauline nor indeed Biblical; and to-day when there is such a cry for a Biblical theology we should note the fact. In St. Paul the important term is not 'soul' which occurs comparatively seldom in his Letters, but 'spirit' (*pneuma*). St. Paul never leaves the traditional Hebrew conception of man as a unity—body, soul, and spirit. It is *man* that is immortal, not just his '*soul*'! That, be it remarked, is the importance of the Christian doctrine of Resurrection. Man in the after-life will not be a disembodied pure 'soul.' What precisely the body will be we cannot guess, but he will have one. It will occur to anyone, though Mr. Stacey does not enter on this point, what a mutilation of Christianity resulted from this un-Pauline and unbiblical emphasizing of the 'soul' as all-important in the salvation of men. If Christians had realized that man is a unity to be saved, it would not have been so recently that the 'social Gospel' became familiar.

Mr. Stacey with great erudition proceeds to examine St. Paul's terms for the constituents of man's nature, laying the foundation in a study of the Old Testament and the Inter-testamental and rabbinic literature, and Hellenistic thought. His view is briefly that the Apostle is under great debt to the Jews, and some debt to the Greeks, but above all to his personal experience of Jesus Christ. Beginning with the encounter on the Damascus road he entered into the truth as it is in Jesus. St. Paul's new emphasis on 'spirit,' his pushing 'soul' into the background, cannot be explained by any influence of Hellenism. A new view of man for St. Paul could only arise from a new view of God. 'Paul discovered a new view of God. He discovered that God was in Christ and thereafter the experience of God in Christ became the determinative factor in Paul's view of man.' 'No study of backgrounds, no matter how extensive or how learned, can do justice to Paul at this point if the influence of his conversion is left out of account.' 'Paul did not gather ideas, he met a Person. And in intimacy with that Person, his knowledge grew.'

---

In contrast with many theories, whether scientific or philosophical, the Bible with its key-words such as sin, repentance, forgiveness, love and covenant consistently acknowledges human freedom and recognizes that judgments of good and evil are a constitutional necessity for every human being. From the Biblical point of view the most important question that can be asked about a man is, What is the external criterion upon which his judgments of good and evil depend? The answer to this question will shape all his decisions and determine the quality of his life. In other words the vital question is, Who or what is your god? Is it the true God or an idol?

[1] Macmillan; 25s. net.

The modern preacher is no stranger to this Biblical insight. Not infrequently he reminds his hearers that idolatry is as rampant to-day as it was three thousand years ago, for, as Luther put it, 'Whatever, then, thy heart clings to and relies upon, that is properly thy god.' It is not always realised, however, that this implies an interpretation of sin as idolatry or allegiance to false gods; and we must be grateful to a recent writer who has made this the subject of a profound and penetrating study—*Hardness of Heart*, by Professor Edmond La B. CHERBONNIER.[1]

There is really no choice between atheism and theism but only a choice between gods. Since man is free, he necessarily has as his god some criterion of judgment independent of himself, and on the basis of that criterion he has a conception of sin in terms of defection to alien gods. This raises the problem of how to determine which of all the multitude of possible gods are merely pretenders and which is the true One. The answer is that a false god can be detected by the fact that, having become the object of a man's allegiance, it proceeds to destroy his freedom. Hardness of heart is the hallmark of idolatry. On the other hand the true God preserves and enhances man's freedom by bringing him into a relation of *agape*. Christianity stakes its claim to be the final truth not upon the height of its ideals or precepts but upon its God's ability to do the one thing man most needs but cannot do for himself—the transformation of hardened hearts into a community of redemption by evoking in them the power to love. This, which is impossible for man, becomes fact through the prior love of God. 'We love Him, because He first loved us.' The false gods, instead of fulfilling man's freedom, put him in bondage, the bondage of the hardened heart; but when man's freedom is directed towards the true God, he no longer seeks fulfilment by taking advantage of his neighbour, nor by fleeing from him, nor by becoming impervious to him, nor by becoming his psychological slave. The true God is He who, by evoking *agape*, binds men together in a redemptive community. The issue here is a matter of life or death. 'We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.'

The Christian conception of sin as idolatry, the orientation of the human heart which destroys *agape*, has in the history of the Church often been entangled and confused with two alternative conceptions. One of these thinks of sin primarily as the breaking of rules: the other, common among philosophers and aesthetes, regards it as due to some constituent element in human existence. Each of these contains truth as well as error. The first appreciates the necessity for some objective reference in the exercise of freedom, but conceives it statically in terms of law. The second realises that sin is prior to individual acts of choice, but traces it rather to a defect in the constitution of human nature than to a misplaced allegiance.

Twice in the history of Christian thought the question of the nature of sin took the centre of the field of controversy. At the turn of the fourth century Augustine contended vehemently against the moralism of Pelagius, and again in the sixteenth century the Protestant Reformers had to formulate the same case against late medieval Catholicism. Without Augustine and the Reformers the Biblical conception might have remained hidden. Unfortunately, however, they frequently failed to abide by it and lapsed into the other alternative, a disparagement of human nature. An important part of Professor Cherbonnier's volume is devoted to showing that the Biblical understanding of sin fulfils the legitimate intentions of both Augustine and Pelagius and is, moreover, vindicated by everyday experience. Even more than Pelagius it stresses man's freedom and his responsibility, but without ministering to his self-righteousness. Like Augustine it recognises the futility of efforts at self-salvation and emphasizes the initiative of God, but without disparaging either good works or human nature as such.

The ancient prophets were much concerned about idolatry, but they never doubted that the true God would vindicate Himself. Elijah at Carmel is typical of the prophetic confidence that idols will be exposed as frauds which cannot implement their promises, and must needs leave their worshippers a prey to disillusionment. In our day a common form of idolatry is the deification of Science; and no pages of the book before us are more devastating in their relevance than those which show how that idolatry is self-defeating. On the level of society it lends itself to the kind of Totalitarianism whose first result is the prostitution of Science. On the personal level it helps to rob man of his birthright by instilling into him the belief that he is no more than a bundle of conditioned reflexes, and the consequence of such a belief is a radical distrust of human reason. Moreover, the victim exhibits the symptoms of all idolatry. Having committed himself to his god he refuses to acknowledge the discrepancy between its promise and its performance. Rather than confess that his allegiance is misplaced he affirms that no mere human sentiment must be allowed to hinder the march of Science. Thus does the twentieth century devotee repeat the folly of the

[1] Gollancz; 12s. 6d. net.

devotee of Baal and Moloch, lacerating himself and sacrificing his dearest treasure to appease a totem of his own fabrication.

Christianity, on the other hand, stands or falls with the claim that its God has acted within history to forgive men's sins and to incorporate them in a redemptive community where the stony heart, in Ezekiel's phrase, is taken out of their flesh and they are given a heart of flesh. This gift of a transformed heart frees men to inherit the high destiny originally intended for them and to exult with a joyous company in the glorious liberty of the children of God.

# Demonology and the Classic Idea of Atonement

By the Reverend John Macquarrie, B.D., Ph.D., Glasgow

Among all ancient peoples, and also among the more backward peoples of our own time, we find a firmly established belief in demons, invisible and quasi-personal forces of evil which threaten the well-being of men. A study such as that of Edward Langton [1] shows how elaborate the ramifications of such a belief could become, and how powerful its influence on the life of a people could be. Belief in demonic powers appears in the pages of the New Testament, though it could hardly be said to be prominent. We are all familiar with the stories in the Gospels in which Jesus is described as casting out devils. St. Paul speaks of 'principalities and powers,' and even of 'the god of this world.' [2] The demonic powers of the New Testament remain fairly shadowy. But when we come to the Fathers of the Church, we find that the demons bulk much more largely. They come forward from the background, so to speak, and practically all of the Fathers devote considerable attention to their activities, and treat them with great seriousness. Thus, to give a random example, Origen, in a reference to the study of demons, says with all earnestness that this is a subject 'which is both wide in extent and difficult for human comprehension.' [3]

Happenings once attributed to the malignant powers of darkness are in our own time for the most part explained in other ways, less appealing perhaps to the imagination, but more satisfying to the reason. Plague, for instance, is attributed to a micro-organism; madness is described in terms of mental disorder. The province of the demons has shrunk away. But *entia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem*. Occam's razor demands the excision of the concept of the demonic from the categories of modern thought. As Sir Charles Sherrington put it, 'The old Walpurgis night is over; its company is disbanded; its votaries are fled . . . we can disentangle the facts of nature free from those perplexing mysteries which were in truth not there—the mystery of nature needs no superstition.' [4]

The disappearance of the demons creates a problem for the Christian theologian. He goes to the ancient Christian documents to interpret the religious truths which they contain, and he finds that these truths are tied up with demonic myths to which he can no longer give credence. What is he to do? He could, of course, simply pass over references to demons with his tongue in his cheek, so to speak. He could without much difficulty eliminate the demonic element from the healing miracles of the Gospels. It would not be quite so easy to eliminate the demonic from St. Paul's teaching, for there it enters into the texture of the theology. Yet the difficulty would still not be insuperable, for the concept of the demonic is not of first-class importance in Pauline thought. But in the case of the Fathers he would find it quite impossible to ignore the demonic element, unless he were willing to perpetrate the most serious mutilation of their work, and discard large areas of their thought. The reason for this is that in the Fathers the idea of the demonic has become closely connected with the central Christian doctrine of the Atonement. With variations of emphasis, the teaching of the Fathers is that the meaning of the death of Christ for faith lies in the victory which He won at the Cross over the powers of darkness. He put to flight the demons, destroyed their dominion over man, and so rescued man from sin and death. This theory was elaborated, notably by St. Gregory of Nyssa,[5] into the idea that the death of Christ was a ransom paid to the devil as the price of man's liberation, and here we seem to enter a completely mythological realm of thinking. Yet this theory of the meaning of Christ's death prevailed in the Church for about one thousand years, until St. Anselm rejected it [6] and tried to substitute a rationalistic account of the matter for the mythological one.

[1] *Essentials of Demonology* [1949].
[2] Ro $8^{38}$, Col $2^{15}$, 2 Co $4^{4}$.
[3] *Contra Celsum*, vii. 67.
[4] *Man On His Nature* [1940], 122.
[5] *Great Catechism*, ch. 22.
[6] *Cur Deus Homo*, i. 7.

We now see how serious would be the consequences if the modern theologian decided simply to ignore or discard the demonic myths in the Fathers. He would need to throw out with them much of their teaching on a central Christian doctrine—indeed, he would need to scrap one of the most important and vital elements in a millennium of theological thought. Some theologians have not hesitated to do this. Writers on the Atonement have frequently prefaced their own accounts of the matter with disparaging remarks on the patristic view. But need we throw out so much? Before we discard, should we not pause and see if we can interpret? We reject the demonic mythology, assuredly. But have we not a duty to ask what these ideas meant to the men who made use of them, and then to see whether we cannot restate what they said in a form which will be free from outmoded mythical elements and yet will preserve the essential meaning of the death of Christ for them, which is what they were trying to express?

The Swedish theologian Gustave Aulén, in his brilliant book *Christus Victor* which appeared a quarter of a century ago, attempted to vindicate the patristic understanding of the Atonement as Christ's conquest of the powers of darkness. On the negative side he was undoubtedly successful in showing how shallow had been many of the criticisms of patristic teaching on the subject. The critics had taken mythical statements as statements of fact, and not surprisingly they found them childish and even repellent. But Aulén claims that 'no serious attempt was made to penetrate behind the outward form to the underlying idea.'[1] He himself did make such an attempt. He showed that the patristic view of the Atonement constitutes a distinct type of interpretation of the meaning of Christ's death, differing both from the view represented by St. Anselm and from that represented by Abelard. This distinct patristic type of theory he called the 'classic' or 'dramatic' view of the Atonement. He held that it was already well established by the time of St. Irenaeus, and that it was the typical view of all the Fathers of both East and West, though admittedly in the West one sees the first pointers towards the Anselmian theory. Moreover, he argued that the patristic view is the most natural development of the doctrine from the teaching of the New Testament itself. He also sought to interpret some of the more lurid imagery in the Fathers, and to show that in every case the essence of the dramatic theory of the Atonement is its assertion that the meaning of Christ's death lies in the overcoming of the enemies of mankind.

Yet it is just here, on the positive side, that we perceive the limits of Aulén's thesis. His achievement is a most impressive one—he has thrown into relief the essential character of the patristic doctrine, so often in danger of being buried under the more fanciful ideas of the Fathers, he has won respect for it as against its critics, and he has shown some of its advantages over alternative views. But he has not given an explicit statement of the doctrine itself in a form free from all mythical reference. Yet only by so doing could he make it intelligible and convincing to people who no longer think along mythical lines. The reason for Aulén's failure at this point is that he lacked a satisfactory way of interpreting myth.

It should perhaps be stated at this point that allegorizing is not the answer to the problem of interpreting myth. An allegory is a conscious literary device, in which the writer deliberately selects concrete imagery to express abstract notions. It is true that the Fathers could and did make use of consciously figurative language when it suited their purpose, but their talk of demons is not usually of this kind. I shall have occasion later to speak in more detail of St. Antony of Egypt, the father of monasticism, and of his famous conflicts with the demons, which are depicted in the most vivid terms. At this point, however, an incident from his experience can be cited to show the inadequacy of allegorizing to interpret what was in the minds of the Fathers when they spoke of the demons. One of his temptations is described in the following terms: 'The demons, as if breaking the four walls of the dwelling, seemed to enter through them, coming in the likeness of beasts and creeping things. And the place was on a sudden filled with the forms of lions, bears, leopards, bulls, serpents, asps, scorpions and wolves.'[2] It is tempting to try to interpret this list of animals as standing for so many vices to which the saint was tempted, but this would be to read into the text something that was present neither in the mind of St. Antony nor in that of his biographer, and so be guilty of a misinterpretation. The animals here are not literary devices. They were on the contrary very real to St. Antony, and his biographer obviously believed that if anyone else had been present, he too would have seen the demonic apparitions.[3] With St. Antony's experience we may contrast a passage at the beginning of *The Divine Comedy* in which Dante tells of his encounter in the dark wood with three beasts—a leopard, a lion, and a wolf.[4] Commentators quite rightly interpret the leopard, for instance, as standing for lust. They are right because they hit precisely the idea which was in Dante's mind. His thought here was

[1] *Christus Victor*, 27.

[2] *Vita S. Antoni*, 9.

[3] *Vita*, 51.

[4] *Inferno*, canto I.

consciously and deliberately allegorical. His leopard was intended to be a figure of speech, and is properly understood as such, but St. Antony's leopard was to him much more than a metaphor, even if it still fell short of the reality of that other very concrete feline of the same species which put an end to the life of St. Saturus in the arena at Carthage.[1] So we have to look farther for our key to the demonic myths.

We turn to another eminent theologian of the Lutheran communion, Rudolf Bultmann, who professes to offer us just what we require. In 1946 he published his now famous essay on demythologizing, and by 1953 he had completed his *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* in which the application of his principles has yielded many new and valuable insights into the thought of the New Testament, particularly that of St. Paul. It may well be that the same canons of interpretation can be extended to the patristic literature. If that is so, then we may be able to pass beyond the point at which Aulén was halted in his vindication of the dramatic theory of the Atonement, precisely because he lacked such canons. This is the problem to which we must now address ourselves.

And immediately we do find something that encourages us to go forward. Bultmann claims that it is the New Testament itself which points the way in demythologizing. Sometimes its writers seem to take their mythical elements quite seriously, but on other occasions they seek to express the same ideas in a form free from myth—in existential statements, as Bultmann would say. There is a certain ambivalence in New Testament thought, where the mythical and non-mythical are not sharply separated, and alternative statements of the same truths may be found side by side. Thus the New Testament itself may supply the clue for its own demythologizing. What encourages us here is that we find Aulén saying something very similar about the Fathers. Speaking of St. Irenaeus, he says: 'By the side of sin and death, St. Irenaeus ranges the devil. But the phrase, "by the side of," scarcely does justice to his thought; it is rather that, like later Eastern theologians, he passes insensibly from the one to the other.'[2] Thus there is the same kind of ambivalence in patristic thought as there is in the New Testament, and it may well be that the Fathers also will supply a clue towards demythologizing their thought.

First of all, let us glance at Bultmann's treatment of such elements of demonic mythology as are found in St. Paul's writings. We saw already that St. Paul can speak in mythical language of 'principalities and powers' under whose domination the world has fallen. According to Bultmann, this terminology comes from Gnosticism. But St. Paul explicitly rejected Gnosticism, and particularly its underlying dualistic understanding of the world. Thus we find in St. Paul himself a tendency to demythologizing, an alternative way of speaking in which the reference is not to powers of darkness but to man's own existence in the world. He does not trace the origin of sin to powers of darkness, but to man himself[3]; and in discussing the corruption of mankind, he assigns the cause of the trouble to the fact that man 'worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator.'[4] The suggestion is that in making the world of things his ultimate concern, man found that it became his master, and that he was in the position of the sorcerer's apprentice. It becomes 'a hostile destroying force,'[5] as Bultmann expresses it, yet it is man who has given to it its demonic character. The myth is thus interpreted in its significance for human existence, and it is the New Testament itself which guides the interpretation.

The character of Bultmann's approach may be defined more clearly by distinguishing it from other possible approaches. In his essay entitled 'The Problem of Hermeneutics' he himself mentions four possible ways in which we may go about the interpretation of a text. In each case the result at which we arrive will correspond to the kind of question which we ask. The kind of question which we ask will in turn depend on the interest in our own minds which has directed our attention to this particular text. The four approaches which Bultmann mentions are the historical, the psychological, the aesthetic, and the existential.[6] Let us illustrate each of these in relation to a text which we have already mentioned, the *Vita S. Antoni* with its luxuriant demonology.

If our approach were historical, then our interest in the text would lie in using it to reconstruct a context of past history. We would do the same kind of thing with the mythology of the *Vita* that Langton has done with the demonology of the Biblical writings—that is to say, show how it arose and what influences formed it. We could trace St. Antony's teaching that the demons have their habitat in the air to Greek sources, his animal phantoms to Egyptian mythology, perhaps ultimately to a primitive zoolatry, and so on. If our approach were psychological, we would be interested in something different. We might possibly regard St. Antony as a brain-sick monk, but that

[1] *The Passion of the Holy Martyrs Perpetua and Felicitas*, vi. 4.

[2] *Christus Victor*, 42.

[3] Ro $5^{12}$.

[4] Ro $1^{25}$.

[5] *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, 226.

[6] *Essays Philosophical and Theological*, 252 ff.

would hardly be fair, since we know that he was a kind and attractive man to whom many turned for advice, and also that he was a shrewd and even witty man who, in spite of his poor education, was able to hold his own with his most sophisticated critics. His belief in demons was not a peculiarity, but one which he shared with his contemporaries. Nevertheless, whatever our verdict on him may be, he would obviously make an interesting psychological study. One would like to know why his visions took the form that they did, why they were so consistently visions of the demonic, what relation they may have had to some of his more eccentric habits, and so on. These are the kind of questions which a psychological approach might answer. An aesthetic approach would look upon the text as an imaginative creation of no mean power, and its attraction from this point of view may be seen from the fact that the temptations have often afforded a theme for painters, notably Hieronymus Bosch, and for literary men such as Gustave Flaubert. It will be noted, however, that in all three of these approaches the interest of the interpreters is something quite different from the interest of the writer of the text. All of these approaches are legitimate, they are also both interesting and useful, but they are approaches from the outside, so to speak, and the meanings which they draw are in no case the meaning which the writer himself was consciously trying to express.

In the fourth type of approach, there is identity of interest as between interpreter and writer. The writer of the *Vita* was seeking to express religious ideas, and it is the interpreter who is asking a religious question who will hit the meaning which the writer was seeking to express. Now for Bultmann a religious question is a question of man's existence, for which reason we may call this an existential approach. The question is, what did this mythical language mean for the existence of the men who thought in that way, and together with that goes the question, what can it mean for my existence. This is the hermeneutic approach which we must apply in our attempt to reach a demythologized version of the patristic teaching on the meaning of the death of Jesus for the Church. [*To be continued.*

# Literature

## *THE EARLY CHURCH*

These representative historical and theological studies—*The Early Church*, by Professor Oscar Cullmann, D.D. (S.C.M.; 25s. net)—(mostly in translations undertaken by Dr. A. J. B. Higgins and Mr. Stanley Godman, and edited by the former), vary only in the relative importance of their subject matter, and not in merit, which is of the highest. In the introductory essay Dr. Cullmann states his general attitude to present trends in theology, emphasizing the necessity for a linkage between philological-historical-psychological study on the one hand, and, on the other, a readiness humbly to consider the Biblical writings 'absolutely' in their intrinsic contents. He directs shrewd thrusts against those students, especially of the younger generation, who in 'superficial lordliness' would make Biblical exegesis an excuse for lazily neglecting historical and kindred studies as merely preliminaries to the main task of theology. His conviction is that because Jesus Christ, the centre of the Biblical message, has to do with history, history must be taken seriously in our approach to a theological examination of truth. He admonishes the Neo-Calvinists for being too reluctant to admit the control of the objective facts of the Divine history of salvation, obtainable by careful consideration of the setting of the facts.

In chs. 3 and 4 we come to the supremely valuable core of the book. In the first of these—on 'The Plurality of the Gospels'—Dr. Cullmann discusses the tension between the trends towards multiplicity and attempts at reduction to a single gospel, the latter tendency arising from the commendable human desire to obtain the *best* gospel. But comparisons are odious, and so immediately the difficulty arises that the latter tendency implies that the Gospels are unequal in value and moreover comes in conflict with the very widespread use of the criterion of apostolic or near-apostolic origin. It also, he thinks, encourages sectarian and doctrinaire (especially docetic) influences, which make it appear as if the upholders of the single essential gospel had an axe to grind. He criticises severely the early theoretical arguments for unification, and suggests that, although the ideal would have been to obtain by whatever means possible the best factual account, the process of development stopped, as it were, half-way, and we have been left with four Gospels, which, however, retain the human value of variety of interpretation and also show respect to the normative character of apostolic origin.

The last consideration leads to a discussion of the relation between Scripture and Tradition, and this is so outstanding in the clearness and convincingness of its arguments as to be worthy of

a book all to itself. It is one of the best contributions to ecumenical understanding which has recently been published. The author shows a unique power of taking an occurrence which is not usually, except by experts, regarded as in the centre of discussion, and by means of it illumines the total situation. One would not naturally have regarded the establishment of the Canon in the second century as of supreme importance, but Cullmann, although he does not hold the extreme Protestant position that we cannot accept any authority beyond that of the Bible as of equal value with it, considers that this fixation of the Canon was of capital importance. It showed that the Church itself decided against the Catholic claim that Tradition, as indicated in the ecclesiastical pronouncements, was of equal value with the Scriptures. He shows conclusively that the Church itself distinguished clearly between the apostolic and the ecclesiastical Tradition. The apostles held a unique position in the crucial early decades of the Christian Church, and could not transmit their peculiar advantages to any successor. The bishops were not the apostles, and the Canon constituted a norm to the control of which the papal claim to infallible teaching authority must always be submitted. It is emphasised, however, that this does not mean that the Holy Spirit is not active in the later Church and in the Church to-day, but only that subsequent ecclesiastical authority is different in kind from that of the apostolic age.

The excellent concluding chapter on the attitude of the Church to civilisation in the first two Christian centuries is highly relevant to present-day interest in problems connected with the relation between religion and politics.

W. S. URQUHART

---

## *EARLY LATIN THEOLOGY*

A notable addition is made to ' The Library of Christian Classics ' by the appearance of volume 5 entitled *Early Latin Theology*: Selections from Tertullian, Cyprian, Ambrose and Jerome, translated and edited by Professor S. L. Greenslade, D.D., The University of Durham (S.C.M.; 30s. net). The eminent scholar responsible was faced with the general unsatisfactoriness of having to make selections at all, with having to choose representative writers, and with having to pick out certain of their productions for this special attention. What he has actually done constitutes a very useful volume. The documents printed are all well known, but this collection has the merit of bringing together utterances of the most outstanding authorities of their time on the Doctrine of the Church, a subject with regard to which they have all something of particular interest to say, and with regard to which their opinions are relevant for the understanding and discussion of what is one of the most important ecclesiastical problems of our time. As an introduction to the living subject of the history of this doctrine, the book is of distinct value.

Tertullian, both man and orator, makes a characteristic appearance in his *De Praescriptionibus* (as the editor prefers to call it), which marks so clearly the line between those who belong to the Church and those who do not. Some extracts from Irenaeus give background for the theology. Cyprian is represented by the treatise on Unity and some Letters expressing his strict views on the problem of the Lapsed and the conditions of church membership. The dominating personality of Ambrose shows itself in various plausible and audacious Letters which inaugurated successive clerical triumphs. Jerome reveals in half a dozen Letters (one of them more a treatise) a view of the Church and the world that exalts monastery high above ministry. Brief editorial Introductions bring out the personalities of the writers and offer the reader helpful clues as to the circumstances.

The volume has also something for those who are in no need of introduction, for the work of translation has been given very careful attention, and the notes, while frequently intended for beginners, contain interesting points about the text and possible interpretations, point out analogies with present-day problems, ask pertinent questions, put forward some of the editor's particular views, and, of course, call attention to important subjects such as apostolic succession, the Roman primacy, validity and efficacy, Church unity, the authority of councils, Church and State, as these present themselves in the text. There is a useful general bibliography.

G. D. HENDERSON

---

## *MARTIN BUBER*

It is one thing for the student to read theological and philosophical works at random and another altogether for these works to be read in some intelligible manner, bearing in mind the influences on the writer and the various steps in the development of the writer's point of view. Philosophers and theologians, beginning primarily with Augustine, have been misused and misunderstood because one idea was severed from another which qualified or broadened the initial statement. Professor Maurice S. Friedman's *Martin Buber : The Life of Dialogue* (Routledge and Kegan Paul; 25s. net) avoids this error and at the same time presents the thought of Buber in some unified framework without distorting or compressing certain ideas into an

*a priori* mould. The treatment given Buber's thought has the great merit of leading the student beyond many of the inadequate, fallacious criticisms and inappropriate uses of ' dialogical ' philosophy. Friedman's discussion of Buber's mysticism, his ideas on the redemption of evil and the scope of ' relational ' thinking, applied in the fields of education, psychology, social philosophy and ethics in a dialectical manner, called by Buber ' the narrow ridge,' avoids and illumines many of the stereotypes commonly applied to existentialism. Buber's narrow ridge, so Friedman remarks, ' is no " happy middle " which ignores the reality of paradox and contradiction in order to escape from the suffering they produce. It is rather a paradoxical unity of what one usually understands only as alternatives—I and Thou, love and justice, dependence and freedom, the love of God and the fear of God, passion and direction, good and evil, unity and duality.' One is reminded of Tillich's method of correlation in the effort to place the discussion of these alternatives on a different level. Buber's middle position between the unreality and the radical reality of evil, so expertly discussed by Friedman, will be of particular interest to those who are so ready to accuse him of a form of pantheism.

Possibly one of the most significant contributions of Friedman's study, other than gathering various writings of Buber, interpreting them and focusing them in some meaningful pattern, lies in the author's critique of the wrong uses of the I-Thou, I-It philosophy, particularly among Christian theologians. Through over-conceptualization one may be content with dialogical philosophizing in place of real dialogue. And many of the theologians who have adopted the I-Thou philosophy have recast it in the form of a radical dualism between I-Thou and I-It relations entirely incompatible with Buber's own thought.

Friedman's book should serve a vital rôle in the furtherance of a mode of thought which is attempting to evade the pitfalls of a non-dialectical approach to many of the fundamental questions in modern theology.

JACK E. MCCLENDON

---

## *THE DOCTRINE OF PERFECTION: DEVELOPMENT AND DEVIATION*

Among the doctrines regarded by Methodists as specially entrusted to them is that of the possibility, in the power of the Holy Spirit, of a Christian life made perfect in love here on earth. A sound account of what this means, and of what it does not mean, is given in the opening pages of *Christian Perfection and American Methodism*, by the Rev. John L. Peters, M.A., Ph.D. (Abingdon Press; $4.00). He goes on to show that the doctrine, so central and compelling in original Methodism, was successfully transplanted to and rooted in America by Wesley's preachers there. Among them, Freeborn Garrettson, who had great influence on the development of American Methodism, ' lived and died a witness of that doctrine he delighted to preach, *perfect love*.' To a Presbyterian who held perfection to be unattainable in this life he retorted: ' Then you do not hold with the doctrine of our Lord and His apostles.'

In the early days much of this authentic note can be heard. Then how did it come to pass that in less than a century after Wesley's death most American Methodists were paying little more than lip service to this distinguishing doctrinal feature? To this question Dr. Peters addresses himself with no small competence and fortified by a sound and comprehensive knowledge of the relevant literature. The valuable central part of the book sums up the historical facts of the proclamation, neglect, modification or rejection of the doctrine in later Methodism. On this sound basis he draws a number of conclusions valid for Methodists not only in the U.S.A. but all over the world.

The application is even wider. It is becoming increasingly clearer that any reunion of Christendom must proceed from the strength of the separated communions. Dr. Peters has done good service in defining a primary element in the *depositum* of the Methodists which they ought to be offering and others have a right to expect to receive. Here is a study worthy of setting alongside those of Newton Flew, Lindström and Sangster; and of no less worth if it pricks the conscience as well as illuminating the understanding of its readers.

MARCUS WARD

---

## *RADHAKRISHNAN*

The aim of *Recovery of Faith*, by Radhakrishnan (' World Perspectives ' series [Allen and Unwin; 8s. 6d. net]), is indicated by its title, the series to which it belongs, and the heading of the last chapter—' Inter-religious Friendship.' The series already includes books by such writers as Dr. Adenauer and Jacques Maritain, and a sincere and worthy contribution is now provided by the Vice-President of India, in one of the best of his many publications. No one could be better fitted by learning and personal capacity for the endeavour to deepen the conception of religion and soften the antagonisms between the various world faiths. The very width of his reading seems sometimes indeed to transform the author into an embodied quotation-book, but the quotations are always

apposite and helpful, except in some cases where they are rather too far separated from their context.

Radhakrishnan is an uncompromising advocate of the necessity of religion in the present age, and trenchantly exposes the inadequacy of doctrines which deny both its validity and its value. He criticises with insight the claims of so-called Pure Science, Humanism, Communism, Authoritarianism, and other forms, sometimes with a slight harshness in reference to certain religions and a reliance on interpretations which are not quite modern. He is particularly good on Communism, pointing out the usefulness of some of its aspects, but unhesitatingly condemning its sacrifice of the individual and its substitution of hatred and violence for the gospel of love.

His main object of attack is the exclusiveness of dogmatic religion, which he regards as a glaring instance of the sin of pride. But there may be pride universal in the human race as well as personal and sectarian pride, and he seems rather too much inclined to a doctrinaire conception of religion as consisting in propositions about, or definitions of, truths which men may arrive at by their own efforts. Surely there is a deeper view: as Pascal says, 'Religion is knowing profoundly what one already knows.' The line of thought associated with Kierkegaard's teaching and, to some extent, that of some of the existentialists, has obviously attracted Radhakrishnan, and perhaps a further quest for the deeper truth on similar lines might make him more ready to admit that history is not repetitive, Jesus Christ is not merely *one* of the prophets, and that a unique incursion of the Divine into history is not only possible but historically supported and metaphysically and religiously justifiable. This is not necessarily exclusive dogmatism, but has relevance to 'the whole family in heaven and earth.'

W. S. URQUHART

---

Jacques Maritain's *Approaches to God* (Allen and Unwin; 8s. 6d. net) appears in a new series—World Perspectives—which proposes 'to offer new vistas in terms of world and human development while refusing to betray the intimate correlation between universality and individuality, dynamics and form, freedom and destiny.' Writing as a renowned Roman Catholic philosopher, Maritain, in the first volume of the series contributes to the current reinterpretation and modernization of the Thomist 'five' philosophical proofs of the existence of God. His discussion is conducted on a hierarchical level: proceeding from the intuitive, prephilosophical knowledge of God; through the philosophical knowledge, which unfolds and develops on the level of scientific discussion and scientific certitude the immediate, primitive intuition of the act of being; and finally reaching the level of man's desire to see and know God, which, as Maritain remarks, 'is superior to reason; which is not due to reason, but to which reason aspires.'

The lengthy treatment given the second approach and the critical norm which it serves has the effect of placing Maritain's arguments on a different level from that envisaged by the series. The division created between intuition and reason, knowledge and faith, will and intellect, immediate and mediate knowledge of God vitiates any approach to God which may maintain the 'intimate correlations.' The absoluteness, the certainty of God being the 'first cause,' to be inferred from the vast number of causes and effects, places reason against the immediate awareness of God—called by Maritain the 'inchoate philosophy of common sense'—producing an irreconcilable cleavage in the cognitive functions. Instead of lifting the argument beyond the subject-object, either-or dichotomy, a possibility in the intuitive, artistic, poetic awareness of the 'unconditional,' referred to by many as the ontological approach, Maritain's treatment leaves the reader within a *Weltanschauung*; one which Paul Tillich and others, on the basis of an Augustinian solution, are attempting to avoid by grounding the cosmological, secondary awareness of God, in the ontological, immediate awareness of God.

---

In volume xxxi. of the *Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research* Albrecht Goetze gives an account of two tablets found at Tell Abu Harmal near Baghdad during excavations in 1945–1949. The tablets contain comparable but different copies of what are called 'The Laws of Eshnunna,' probably dating a considerable time before Hammurabi. Both texts appear to be private copies of the laws made perhaps in scribal schools for instruction, and it is interesting for Biblical studies to note the difference between the two 'documents.'

As in the Code of Hammurabi and the Book of the Covenant in Exodus a variety of subjects is dealt with, without obvious logical sequence. There are sections on maximum prices, business transactions, and rules limiting sales and purchases; on marriage and divorce; slavery; on hire of waggons, boats, and animals; on theft and bodily injury. There are many contacts between the laws and the Book of the Covenant. The laws of unlawful entry make the same distinction between day and night as in Ex $22^{2f.}$; and light is thrown on marriage customs, sex laws, deposits, damage caused by animals, assault, and

the redemption of property. There is also a statement of the legal basis on which a man, like Jacob, could pay the 'bride-money' by service instead of cash. In the case of the loss of a deposited article Goetze compares the laws in the Code of Hammurabi and the Book of the Covenant and concludes that Ex $22^{7ff.}$ 'seems to be the most archaic treatment, of which traces linger on in the laws of Eshnunna, although, on the whole, it has been modernised' (p. 104). The book contains the text, translation, and commentary on the sixty sections of the Code, a glossary of all the terms, and photographic reproductions and transcriptions of the tablets.

The price of the volume is $4.00.

---

Professor William Robinson of Butler University, Indianapolis, is a prolific writer. His latest publication is *Peace in Heaven and on Earth* (Berean Press; 4s. 6d. net). It is a clear and scholarly discussion of the Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians; indeed, one might almost call it a running commentary on these Epistles. The central interest is the nature of the One Church, whose function is to redeem man in all aspects of his life as well as to redeem the whole world of Nature and even the angelic hosts in heaven. Because of this high destiny it is vital that the Church should have peace within its own borders and be one united fellowship, all the richer because including diversities.

---

As a Methodist minister, the Rev. Thomas R. Griffin, L.Th., has travelled in many lands and has given us a delightful book, *Excursions with God* (James Clarke; 10s. 6d. net). It is not a travel book; it is a collection of his musings on persons and things observed in his journeys. He was able, as he says, 'to trace all sorts of parables in a variety of situations.' Anything starts him off—it may be boys playing football in the precincts of a Cathedral, it may be the smell of a Venetian Canal, or a bush-wedding or a small boy nibbling chocolate—no matter how trivial the happening it sets him musing on some important moral or spiritual point. Would that we all had eyes to see the teaching of the quite simple things that confront ourselves! Our preaching would be so much more interesting and effective.

---

We welcome a volume which makes an important addition to the impressive list of Calvin studies which have been appearing in recent years. It is *Calvin's Doctrine of the Work of Christ*, by Professor John F. Jansen (James Clarke; 8s. 6d. net). The author concentrates attention on the familiar formula of the three offices of Christ as prophet, priest, and king, and shows that while that formula owes its popularity to Calvin, though it did not originate with him, yet it is not an adequate expression of his own theology. Calvin began with a doctrine of the two offices of Christ as king and priest, and essentially he never abandoned it. In a concluding section Professor Jansen suggests that the triple formula is open to criticism on systematic and Biblical grounds, and even from the point of view of practical usefulness.

---

*The Story of Thomas More*, by Mr. John Farrow (Collins; 16s. net), is an attractive study, based on the original sources, of the accomplished Humanist, who became Lord Chancellor of England and met a martyr's death because he not only disapproved of Henry VIII's second marriage but also could not stomach the royal claim to supremacy over the Church. In his own stirring words he 'died the King's good servant, but God's first.' It is good to have such a man brought to remembrance, though one suspects that the author is too eulogistic.

---

*Original Good*, by Dr. Macpherson Lawrie (C. W. Daniel Co.; 6s. net), is an optimistic study of human nature. The author, a specialist in nervous and mental disorders, upholds the inherent goodness of man. There is much wisdom in his practical recommendations, but he carries his thesis too far. If human nature is so sound, and evil so external and detached, one wonders how the world ever got into its present state.

---

Miss Jean Fraser, formerly director of the Youth Department of the World Council of Churches, has written an informative book—*Under the Cross* (Edinburgh House Press; 5s. net)—which surveys the Church's mission in the contemporary world and shows how the Church is meeting opposition from without and tensions within, while facing the challenge to die to denominational prejudice and to the lust for quick and easy success. Up-to-date knowledge and Christian judgment are evident on nearly every page, and we wish this book a wide circulation.

---

In a booklet, *Praying for Unity* (Edinburgh House Press; 1s. 6d. net), Dr. Olive Wyon follows the Christian Year in a series of devotional services, most of which have explicit references to unity. The Scripture passages are relevant, and the prayers and thanksgivings, culled from a wide liturgical area, are beautiful in expression.

---

Three further volumes in the 'Christian Faith' series published by Messrs. Victor Gollancz at 12s. 6d. net. have come to hand. *Doing the Truth*, by the Very Rev. James A. Pike, is described as a

summary of Christian Ethics. While it deals with ethical problems like war, marriage and business life, which Christianity shares with all systems which take human freedom seriously, it makes a Christian stand by taking vocation, in the sense of God's all-inclusive claim upon us, as the key-word of Christian ethics, and by frequent recurrence to a Trinitarian pattern. As Father, God creates us and calls us to His service: in His Son He meets us in our sins and redeems us: by His Holy Spirit He guides us in our grateful response. Thus the Christian knows the process which may be defined as justification by grace through faith unto good works. This is a helpful book, lucidly written.

The same may be said of *The Strangeness of the Church*, by Professor Daniel T. Jenkins. One of its major themes is that the Church is integral to the gospel, and another is that what is truly strange is the power of internal renewal which appears to work in the Church. We commend especially the chapters on 'Church and State' and on the 'Unity of the Church.' This is ecumenical thinking, wise and mature. The third volume, *Hardness of Heart*, by Professor Edmond La B. Cherbonnier, is a contemporary interpretation of the doctrine of sin. It is commented upon under 'Notes of Recent Exposition.'

---

As to 'Guidance' we all know there are two extreme views, one of which comes near to denying it altogether, the other of which runs into manifest absurdity, and may be used to explain any eccentricity of behaviour or even crime. In a booklet, entitled *Guidance: Some Biblical Principles* (Inter-Varsity Fellowship; 1s. net), Dr. Oliver R. Barclay unfolds the true sphere of Guidance, rebukes those who do not seek it, and safeguards it against folly.

---

'Let us weigh the gain and the loss in wagering that God is'; this sentence from Pascal suggested to Dr. Hunter B. Blakely the title of his book—*I Wager on God* (John Knox Press, Richmond, Virginia; $3.00). It is a very good book. Behind it lies the personal experience of the author. Faith is essential to living but faith should never be set in sharp contrast to reason. God made us intelligent beings capable of knowledge and part of His command is 'thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy *mind*.' The book contains fifteen chapters dealing with a great variety of topics—Building a Personal Faith, What Christ means to me, Jesus of Nazareth, God and History, God and the Universe, The Holy Spirit, The Christian View of Man, The Christian and Things, The Church, The Authority of Scripture, Prayer, Power. All are helpful. The literary style is excellent, and an extensive bibliography is appended.

---

Mr. Vernon Hamer has written a Nativity Play, *Let Earth and Heaven Combine* (Methodist Youth Department; 9d.). It will be easily produced and the parts will be easily memorized by juvenile players. We like the scene where the 'littlest' angel helps the lame shepherd-boy to Bethlehem. We are astonished that the Wise Men enter before the Shepherds have left, and in some degree that the Archangel Raphael is female.

---

In *The Greatness and Glory of Christ* (Pickering and Inglis; 10s. net), Mr. Robert Rendall deals with the Person and Offices of Christ as set forth in certain Scripture passages 'in which Christians perceive the great focal points of faith.' In a second part he gives us five addresses on 'the good life.' We like the unpretentious way in which the writer sets forth his expositions of Scripture. He may not always perceive the difficulties of some of the topics with which he deals, but his steadfast assurance of faith will help us all.

---

*Christian Hymns*, by the Reverend Kenneth L. Parry (S.C.M.; 8s. 6d. net), deals with hymns in an unusual way. The writer says: 'We take the hymns dealing with the great themes and doctrines of the Christian Faith and deal with them chronologically in each section. In this way we can trace in our hymns the developing thought of the Church through the centuries.' The sections are: The Eternal Father, The Lord Jesus Christ, The Holy Spirit, The Holy Trinity, The Church, Foreign Missions, The Sacraments, Times and Seasons, National Hymns. There are many most interesting definitions within this book. Augustine said of a hymn: 'It is necessary . . . if it is to be a hymn that it has these three things, both praise and praise of God, and that it be sung.' 'A good hymn,' said Tennyson, 'is the most difficult thing in the world to write. In a good hymn you have to be commonplace and practical. The moment you cease to be commonplace and put in any expression at all out of the common it ceases to be a hymn.' It must be on the level of what Isaac Watts described as 'the plain sort of Christian.' Christopher Wordsworth said: 'The first duty of a hymn is to teach sound doctrine, and thus to save souls.'

This is a most interesting book. Inevitably at times it runs the risk of becoming a list of hymns, but, even when it does that, it whets the appetite for more. The writer has done us a real service in giving us such a comprehensive journey through the hymns.

# Expository Problems

## The Virgin Birth [1]

By the Reverend Canon H. E. W. Turner, D.D., Lightfoot Professor of Divinity in the University of Durham

### 1. The argument from silence

The only detailed accounts of the Virginal Conception (hereafter called the Virgin Birth) occur in the First and Third Gospels. But does this imply that the authors were recording a novelty or can traces of the belief be found elsewhere in the New Testament? Here the brackets of possibility are represented by Vincent Taylor and Douglas Edwards. It is a fair assumption that the primitive Kerygma did not contain any reference to the Virgin Birth. No appeal for belief in Christ is made on these grounds within the New Testament. Nor is it (to say the least) a leading theme of Pauline Christology though too much must not be inferred from this fact. For Paul the Divinity of Christ is rather a basic assumption than a matter for proof and the occasional character of the Pauline Epistles must be kept steadily in view. An indirect allusion may, however, occur in Gal $4^4$ where (in line with Ro $1^3$ and Ph $2^7$) the Birth of Christ is described by the more general term *genomenos* rather than the normal New Testament verb *gennaō*. The significance of this change is not removed by Jn $8^{58}$ where *gignomai* occurs in a different contrast between eternal subsistence and temporal origin. The silence of Mark is partly explained by his preoccupation with the public ministry of Jesus, but the description 'Son of Mary' in $6^3$ in sharp contrast to the customary use of a patronymic appears significant even on the lips of His fellow townsmen. Despite his record of the Virgin Birth it is surprisingly altered by Matthew. The Fourth Gospel provides a probable allusion in $1^{12-13}$ where the description of Christians is inexplicably cumbersome unless the Virgin Birth is in the writer's mind. The variant reading 'Who was born' is more probably an echo of the allusion than the authentic text. The Johannine use of irony suggests oblique allusions in $7^{41-42}$, $9^{29}$ and even in $8^{41}$ especially if this last passage is taken together with certain calumnies later recorded in the Talmud. The data suggest an intermediate position between a daring novelty on the part of the Evangelists and a full place within the public tradition of the Church. That delicacy should dictate reserve on the part of the Virgin Mother is implied by Lk $2^{19.\ 51}$ and seems natural enough.

[1] Vincent Taylor, *The Virgin Birth*; D. Edwards, *The Virgin Birth in History and Faith*; J. Gresham Machen, *The Virgin Birth of Christ*; G. H. Box, *The Virgin Birth of Jesus*; Sir William Ramsay, *Was Christ born at Bethlehem?*; R. Syme, *Klio* [1934], 122 ff. T. Corbishley, S.J. in *J.R.S.*, xxiv, 43 ff., *J.Th.S.*, xxxvi, 22 ff.

### 2. St. Luke

In general the Lucan Infancy Narrative is an impressive document. It is the Mother's story told with simplicity and deep reserve. The background is obviously Palestinian and certainly not that of Luke himself. The Messianic expectation is not noticeably influenced by later Christian modifications. Except at one point ($2^{22}$), which is nevertheless capable of reasonable explanation, the Jewish background is natural and accurate. There emerges an attractive picture of the humble and poor (*anavim*) looking for the redemption of Israel or the consolation of Jerusalem. Such pietist circles might well be those among whom apocalyptic writings like 1 Enoch were principally current and may conceivably be connected with other documents which still await further elucidation. Pietism and Apocalyptic have often been closely related in later religious history. Apart from a single hint in the *Nunc Dimittis*, which does not lack Jewish parallels, Luke's typical universalism is conspicuous by its absence. The emphatically Jewish tone of the narrative tells heavily against the once fashionable theory, never at its strongest particularly convincing, of the pagan origin of the whole tradition.

The assessment of the Lucan narrative partly depends upon our view of the compilation of the Gospel as a whole. Many scholars maintain that Luke was an author whose work 'grew-up,' others speak warmly of his creative artistry. Whether the Proto-Luke hypothesis ultimately maintains itself or not, certain curious facts emerge which bear directly upon the Lucan Infancy Narrative. The third chapter opens with a careful, though not wholly lucid, synchronism which might well at one stage have served as the opening of the Gospel. The genealogy of Jesus follows the first mention

of His name in the same chapter. It has therefore been reasonably inferred that the first two chapters represent an appendix placed at the beginning of the Gospel with the least possible dislocation of existing material. A similar situation may exist with the allusions to the Ascension in the last chapter of the Gospel and the opening pericope of Luke's second volume.

Vincent Taylor, however, traces a further stage in the compilation of the Third Gospel. He suggests that the first two chapters may once have existed without the vital section $1^{34-35}$. Vocabulary tests, however, suggest a later addition by Luke himself rather than the work of a redactor. Apart from the substitution of *v.* 38 for 34 in one old Latin manuscript (b), which may be merely a mechanical confusion, the textual tradition is solid in its support. Little can be built upon the argument that the context reads more smoothly without the 'additional' verses; in fact their omission would leave the operative word 'virgin' in *v.* 27 somewhat in the air, weakens the force of *v.* 36 (Elizabeth's conception) and may even leave Mary's subsequent action unexplained. The contrast between the attitude of the angel to Zechariah and Mary is an unreal difficulty. Zechariah is rebuked for his request for a sign, Mary, conscious of her virginity, is amazed at the angelic promise and is therefore comforted. For Vincent Taylor the real difficulties are twofold—an alleged discrepancy between the two halves of the angelic message and certain indications in the remainder of the narrative. He maintains that *vv.* 31–33 (especially in the light of $2^{21}$, before He was conceived in the womb) can be understood most naturally as a prophecy of the birth of the Messiah capable of fulfilment in a purely natural way, whereas the notion of a Virginal Conception only emerges in the second half of the angelic message which belongs in his theory to the interpolation. But this leaves unsupported the reference to Elizabeth's remarkable conception in *v.* 38 and the alternatives (disregarding the slight inconsequence in ch. 2) of either an immediate miraculous conception or one in the immediate future appear greatly preferable. The mention of conception in this particular context might naturally evoke surprise or even consternation and the possibility that Mary, as it were, leapt ahead of the angel's message to his meaning cannot be ruled out of account. Minute linguistic analysis can easily lose sight of what is inherently probable in particular situations. Vincent Taylor then turns to certain expressions in Lk 1–2 which appear inconsistent with belief in the Virgin Birth. Lk $2^{22}$ speaks of 'their purification' where, as some manuscripts actually read, 'her purification' might have been expected. The context seems to exclude the otherwise tempting suggestion that the redemption of the first-born and the purification of the Mother are included in a single formula. But the alternative offering provided for the poor in the Torah is correctly described and the ceremony might easily be described as a family act. If the Mother alone was purified, presumably Joseph provided the offering. Possibly, however, we need look no further for a reasonable explanation than the plural form of the verb. Difficulty has also been found in the surprise of Joseph and Mary twice mentioned in ch. 2. Lk $2^{48}$, where it is caused by our Lord's reply, can be safely disregarded, but it is claimed that the recipients of angelic messages ought not to have been surprised at Simeon's lesser acclamation. But it is difficult not to feel that such criticism reveals a somewhat wooden approach. Were the Holy Family immediately aware of the full implications of the Annunciation? Might not surprise reasonably be caused not so much by the content of Simeon's words as by the fact that the speaker was a stranger? A more serious problem, which variant readings in certain manuscripts show to be no modern invention, concerns the description of Joseph and Mary as 'the parents' in several passages ($2^{27.\ 33.\ 41.\ 43}$). Mary's words to the boy Jesus in $2^{48}$ appear, however, wholly natural. Matthew significantly avoids this form of words altogether. It remains possible, however, that Luke is merely introducing us to the empirical situation. Apparently under Jewish Law a child born after betrothal would be automatically reckoned a member of the family unless the male partner expressly disowned paternity. Since this is the background of the Matthæan tradition, no difficulty would have arisen if such expressions had occurred in the First Gospel from which they are absent. But in the absence of any positive indication of the later tradition that Mary as well as Joseph was of Davidic descent, the Lucan narrative (*e.g.*, $2^{4}$) can also be read in this sense.

More recently Vincent Taylor has restated an older hypothesis that Luke has combined an earlier John the Baptist cycle with parallel traditions in honour of our Lord.[1] Certainly the two narratives run parallel, though they are closely interwoven, and no break in background exists. It cannot, of course, be proved that the 'Johannine tradition' ever existed independently either in oral or written form but it is claimed that Lucan characteristics in style and vocabulary fall below the average in this section though they rise beyond it in the remainder of the narrative. The scale of his recent work precluded detailed proof but even on a favourable estimate it is doubtful how far it would carry us. Questions of historical value and literary

[1] Vincent Taylor, *The Life and Ministry of Jesus*, 18–19.

method are not identical and full allowance would have to be made for variations in subject-matter and even for the influence of the Septuagint on Lucan idiom and style.

An important subsidiary difficulty still remains—the census of Quirinius. The broad facts are familiar enough. P. Sulpicius Quirinius was certainly legate of Syria in A.D. 6 when the provincialization of Judaea was preceded by a famous census. If this is the census to which Luke refers, all efforts to harmonize his narrative with the First Gospel must be abandoned since Herod the Great, mentioned by Matthew as still on the throne of Judaea, died in 4 B.C. But at the later date Quirinius was no stranger to the Middle East and an ingenious argument was constructed by Sir William Ramsay to support the view that Quirinius held the governorship of Syria twice. In later times this would have caused an awkward block on the promotion roster of the Civil Service but this objection may not be decisive in the principate of Augustus. Yet the Emperor would hardly have made the same nomination twice to an office which carried with it an important Army Command as well as a virtually vice-regal authority over the Eastern chain of client states. Quirinius himself belonged to the new nobility, products of a *'carrière ouverte aux talents'* whose numbers increased considerably during the principate of Augustus. But the evidence adduced is scarcely strong enough to support this theory. The inscription of an illustrious unknown discovered at Tivoli which appears to mention a second governorship of Syria cannot refer to Quirinius whose home was at Lanuvium. Professor Syme has convincingly assigned to a member of the leading family of Tivoli the *Aelii Plautii Silvani*. Since the offices are arranged in descending order, it is more likely to mean that its subject was twice governor of an imperial province, of Syria on the second occasion. Quirinius was certainly in command of an expedition against a troublesome Cilician tribe, the Homonades, before A.D. 6 but Syme argues strongly that on this occasion he was governor of Galatia-Pamphylia temporarily raised in status for the purpose. A third inscription which describes Quirinius as duumvir or honorary Mayor of Pisidian Antioch probably dates from his attachment to the staff of the grandsons of Augustus on a goodwill mission to the Middle East. Thus the evidence hardly compels the assumption of an earlier governorship of Syria. The theory that Quirinius was virtually joint governor of Syria with a certain Saturninus during the Homonadensian War fails to explain why Luke should mention in this connexion a military commander operating in the opposite corner of the province instead of the one on whose shoulders the main burden of administration would presumably fall. The attempt of Fr. Corbishley to squeeze Quirinius into the list of governors of Syria in the last pre-Christian decade, though ingenious, involves too much elbow work to be entirely satisfactory. The best solution rests upon a remarkable statement of Tertullian in his work against Marcion, the most acute Biblical critic of the century, that the census took place under Sentius Saturninus who was governor of Syria between 8 and 6 B.C. By this time it was no light matter to contradict an Evangelist. As a trained lawyer Tertullian was well able to verify his facts and Saturninus as refounder of Tertullian's native place, Carthage, was a name likely to catch his eye and remain in his mind. Although no Gospel manuscript supports Tertullian here, it is better to accept a slight Lucan inaccuracy over the name of the governor than to construct a complicated theory which just falls short of conviction.

The objection that a census could not have been held in a client state is destitute of force. As Kornemann has shown, Rome's clients were not so much independent allies as 'the invisible frontiers' of the Empire. In any case an exact parallel exists in Cappadocia where a census was held before the death of Archelaus, the last client king. Towards the close of Herod's reign his relations with Rome deteriorated. A matrimonial dispute with another client king led to an unauthorised war and his repeated liquidation of potential successors is reflected in a *bon mot* of Augustus that he would rather be Herod's pig than his son (*hun, huion*). A message that he should no longer consider himself the friend of the Roman people (most favoured client king) might well be reinforced by a census (the usual preliminary to provincialization). While a decree that 'all the world should be taxed' (if this is really Luke's meaning) appears improbable, there is adequate evidence for widespread census activity at this particular date. It was generally in the air in government circles as well as a fitting punishment for Herod's particular misdemeanours. There remains the question why the census should involve Joseph and Mary in a journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem. It is hardly surprising that we are imperfectly informed about the details of a Roman census. Ancient historians do not normally record for posterity details sufficiently familiar to their readers. Papyrus evidence, however, proves that in Egypt provision was made under certain conditions for a return to places of origin for periodic registration. But how far Egypt was typical is a question which still remains without an adequate answer. As the principal granary of Rome it was important to keep the peasants on the land and to check their drift to Alexandria. This might not apply either

to Judaea in general or to Joseph in particular. Rome was not necessarily concerned with local Palestinian details and Luke gives us no further assistance on the point. The safest conclusion might be that, while reasonable answers can be returned to the questions Why? and When? insufficient evidence exists at present for a satisfactory answer to the question How? In any case problems of this kind have a greater bearing upon the setting of the tradition than upon its essential truth.

Without indulging in 'romantic criticism,' it may be concluded that no source is more probable than the Mother herself. But problems of date and circumstance remain unsolved. The 'We passages' in Acts prove that Luke was in Palestine with Paul on the third missionary journey. If, however, the first two chapters form an appendix to the rest of the Gospel, the dates do not correspond since the Marcan Gospel, which was certainly one of Luke's sources elsewhere in the Gospel, can hardly have been in existence at the time. The date of Mary's own death is quite unknown and alternative channels through which her story might have reached Luke may be implied in Lk $8^{2}$ or even Ac $21^{8-9}$.

### 3. St. Matthew

Although variant readings cause some difficulty, the place of the Birth Narrative within the Gospel as a whole has not been seriously challenged. It reflects the standpoint of Joseph with particular reference to the questions which the Virgin Birth would raise in his mind. His absence from the Gospel record elsewhere makes the transmission of his testimony a difficult problem. Davidic descent is reckoned legally rather than physically in harmony with the Jewish attitude to betrothal. The genealogy itself is clearly a formal construction arranged in three groups of fourteen names each and based by the principle of Gematria on the name David. The mention of Tamar, Rahab and Bathsheba, as it were in the margin of the genealogy, is remarkable and deliberate.

Some of the details harmonize well enough with the probable historical setting. The massacre of the Innocents illustrates the senile jealousy of Herod the Great. The star from the East may represent a conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn visible on Kepler's computation in Palestine during certain months of 7 B.C., a year which falls within the governorship of Saturninus. It could easily be interpreted astrologically by the Magi to portend the birth of a World-Ruler. Somewhat similar expectations underlie the language (though not the application) of Virgil's fourth *Eclogue*. Although not normally found outside Persia Magi accompanied Tiridates on his mission to Nero in A.D. 65.

Many find a difficulty in the artificiality of the proof-texts appended to the narratives. No Jewish expectation that the Messiah should be Virgin-born has yet been discovered and it is certainly not the original meaning of Is $7^{14}$. A Christian who used the Septuagint text of the Old Testament and who already accepted the Virgin Birth on other grounds might naturally appeal to the passage as Scriptural warrant. The connexion of the other proof-texts to their appended incidents is equally loose. Even the source of the text 'And He shall be called a Nazarene' is at present unknown; it may simply be a portmanteau expression summarizing the Old Testament passages which describe the Messiah as the Branch (*netzer*). It must, however, be remembered that the more loosely the proof-texts are appended, the less likely it becomes that they gave rise to the narratives to which they are attached.

There may be some force in the contention of Gore who 'would not be disposed to attach a great deal of significance to the story of the First Gospel if it stood alone.' A comparison with Jewish midrash, the imaginative expansion of a substantially historical tradition, may be apposite here. But both halves of this definition must be assigned equal importance. Whatever its historical value in detail, the Matthaean record represents a narrative substantially independent of the Lucan Gospel current in a different Christian circle, though perhaps couched in a different idiom.

### 4. Doctrinal significance

Granted the historicity of the tradition, what place should be assigned to the Virgin Birth in our doctrine of the Incarnation? Against the silence of the primitive Kerygma must be set its early acceptance in the Church and its assured place in the Catholic Creeds. The significance of these facts must not be underestimated.

(i) Some find here a real obstacle to belief in the Incarnation on the ground that it appears inconsistent with the fulness of the Divine Condescension revealed in Christ. Normally, however, such views are combined with a denial or at least with grave doubts about its historicity. Much depends here upon our point of entry into the doctrine of the Incarnation. Those who regard the Eternal Son of God as the permanent centre of the life of the Incarnate Lord find fewer difficulties than those who start with the historical Jesus as an individual man. The question largely turns upon whether we consider the rhythm of the Incarnation to lie in a Kenosis of the Godhead or a Plerosis of the Manhood. Brunner is a notable exception here but his

attitude to the historicity of the tradition is at least one of reserve. His treatment of the doctrinal aspects of the Virgin Birth is certainly the weakest part of an otherwise great book.[1] His criticism follows two lines. The Virgin Birth is not an integral part of the Incarnation but merely an interpretation or an attempted explanation. 'We have no desire to attempt to explain the way in which God works His miracles.' But what if the Virgin Birth is not an explanation but part of the explicandum? His argument virtually assumes that it is not part of the historical tradition. Even as an explanation it seems to him to fall short, for it amounts to what might be called a 'biologisation' of the Incarnation. Here Brunner fails to give the doctrine its full force. He tends to isolate the 'Born of the Virgin Mary' from its even more important antecedent 'Conceived by the Holy Ghost.' Christian theology is not greatly concerned with the uniqueness or otherwise of the Birth as an example of parthenogenesis. As Grensted points out, 'It would not have puzzled the early Christians much to hear of some other case. But it would not have meant for them what it means in the case of Jesus. The whole significance of the Birth narratives is that Jesus, Friend, Brother, Saviour and Living Lord was so born.'[2] Its significance is certainly not exhausted by the notion that the Incarnate Son of God was a biological 'sport.'

(ii) Others would defend the necessity of the doctrine on a priori grounds.

(a) The older Reformed Dogmatic theologians, Polanus and Turretini, connect it closely with He 7[3] 'without father, without mother.' As the Son of God in His Eternal Generation was without mother, so in His Incarnation within time He lacked a father. While not lacking in ingenuity, the argument rests upon a precarious exegetical premise. It hardly establishes dogmatic necessity though it rightly notes the congruity of the existence of some distinction between the *modus generandi* of One who was from Eternity and an ordinary man.

(b) A connexion is sometimes traced between the Virgin Birth and the breaking of the 'entail' of original sin. This argument is treated with greater respect by Brunner who is hesitant on the doctrine than by Barth who accepts it enthusiastically. It is difficult in any case to see how far it can carry us. It draws the relation between original sin and the normal processes of human generation too close and in the wrong way. It might even imply its transmission solely through the male partner or lead (as in Roman Catholic theology) to the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary or even less eligibly to an infinite regress. The argument may, however, have some value in emphasizing the congruity of the Virgin Birth and the concept of our Lord as the founder of a new humanity.

(iii) The treatment of Karl Barth is of special significance. It might be described as a statement of the dogmatic necessity of the Virgin Birth on a posteriori grounds. It is closely parallel to the empty tomb at the other end of our Lord's earthly life. Both form a single confirmatory sign marking off this particular life at its outset and its goal as the mystery of the revelation of God. In its most rounded form it possesses both positive and negative aspects which point to the one Christ as both God and Man. The clause 'Conceived of the Holy Ghost' provides against any ebionite or humanistic interpretation of the Person of our Lord, while the phrase 'Born of the Virgin Mary' precludes any form of docetism. Barth insists upon other aspects of the doctrine which harmonises closely with his own approach to theology. It is an act of the Divine Sovereignty or the Divine Initiative. The rôle of the Virgin herself is passive, receptive and obedient. In his view it deals the death-blow to any form of Synergism, the co-operation of Man with God. Yet, impressive though this argument for necessity undoubtedly is, it is doubtful whether it goes further than establishing the deep congruity which exists between the Virgin Birth and the affirmations about our Lord which historically Christians have been led to make.[3]

(iv) If an expression of personal opinion is legitimate in an article of this type, I would maintain that the Virgin Birth is congruous with rather than necessary to the Incarnation. If the previous question is one of historical fact, we can only argue in a posteriori grounds and these are never in themselves sufficient to establish necessity. Yet if we could never deduce a priori the necessity of this particular sign, granted belief in its historicity, we can accept thankfully its deep congruity with the thing signified. Indeed it might almost be said that as a congruous miracle it is a miracle of congruity. To repeat what I have written elsewhere before Barth's discussion came into my hands, it represents the first (as the Resurrection forms the last) of the great seals of God on the life of His Son as if already in creative act He were saying 'This is my beloved Son; hear ye Him.'

Is it then possible to combine belief in the Incarnation with disbelief in the Virgin Birth? Here a distinction must be drawn between the Individual and the Church. No doubt God honours the imperfect faith of an honest disbeliever in the

[1] E. Brunner, *The Mediator*, 322–327.

[2] L. W. Grensted, *The Person of Christ*, 64.

[3] K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 1, pt. 2, 172–202.

doctrine who nevertheless confesses the Incarnate Christ as his Lord and his God, just as some appear to be firmly convinced of the truth of the Resurrection without committing themselves to the view that the Tomb was found empty on the first Easter morning. There may be some element of paradox in both views. Perhaps a further distinction must also be drawn between those who base their disbelief on a different appraisal of the historical value of the evidence than that attempted here and those who reject it upon the wider ground of the impossibility of miracle whether in general or of this particular kind. The former may amount to little more than a difference of historical judgment, the latter involves more serious consequences of a theological kind. An individual might well reject the doctrine and yet remain a sincere and convinced Christian whose membership of the Church probably ought not to be called in question. It would, however, be a wholly different matter for the Church as a whole to falter with regard to the doctrine. Ultimately, if not immediately, such a procedure would almost certainly undercut the gospel.

# In the Study

## Virginibus Puerisque

### Altering the Indicator

By the Reverend James Wright, M.A.,
Boat of Garten

We have a very useful gadget—probably lots of people have one. Its purpose is to tell the milkman how much milk we require each morning. We can set the dial at one pint or two pints or three, and so on, and it is a most polite indicator because it asks for so many pints *please*.

We lay it on the ledge of the fence beside our gate—but it must have caught the eye of some one besides the milkman—very likely a naughty boy who must have fiddled about with it and changed the figure on the dial—so that on a day when we wanted three pints, the milkman would leave only one and we couldn't have porridge for breakfast that morning—a bad start for the day in Scotland. I need hardly tell you we took a poor view of the lad who played that nasty trick on us.

There are, of course, other kinds of indicator—the direction-posts on the wayside, for example, which tell us how to get to this place or that. Just imagine what would happen if some one started changing these round, with the result that you set out to go to the seaside for a day and landed up instead among the pits and had to make castles not of sand but of coal dust.

And there are the lights at the street crossings telling the cars when they can go ahead—on the green—and when they must wait—on the red. Suppose some one were able to meddle with these so that the cars from all directions got the green light at the same time. What a traffic tangle that would create, and worse than that, people might well get injured or killed. Only a wicked person would dream of playing such a trick.

Well, Jesus set up indicators for us to tell us what we should do and the way we ought to go. One of these tells us we are here not to be served but to serve, not to look after ourselves but to look after the others instead. But there is a wicked spirit inside us which tries to change the indicator and persuade us to see ourselves right and never mind about the others. There is a hymn you are sure to know which tells you how to deal with that wicked spirit: 'Ye must not hear him.' If you listen to him you will land in misery yourself and create a lot of misery for others. Take your directions from Jesus and where He indicates 'This is the way,' then walk ye in it.

---

### A Thought for Remembrance Day

By the Reverend James N. S. Alexander,
B.D., S.T.M., Aberdeen

I have just been thinking that if Hitler had won the War it is unlikely that there would be any Scouts now or Life Boys or Brigade Boys or Brownies or Guides.

I suppose he would have set up organizations of his own, just like the ones he had in Germany for German boys and girls: the Hitler Youth and something similar for the girls. And I'm afraid that you would more or less have been forced to join them.

A year or two before the War I went with a group of Glasgow school boys to Germany and amongst our experiences was a visit to a meeting of the Hitler Youth. It doesn't exist now, of course, but I remember it well. How different it was from the B.B.! Certainly both have a uniform. Both do a lot of marching and drill and P.T. But the atmosphere was entirely different; the spirit

and the aims had nothing in common at all with our B.B.

In the Hitler Youth boys talked about war, gloried in army marching songs, shouting their heads off about the strength of their armed power and what they would do to their enemies. Each week they listened enthralled to passages from Hitler's notorious book of hate—much as the B.B. would have a Scripture lesson at its Bible Class. They used to learn that truth only had its place where it was convenient. Pity and tenderness were unmanly. Force was the only strength. 'Might is right' was roughly their slogan.

Now in the B.B. and the Scouts and the Guides we learn the exact opposite, that right is might; that it is peace not war that is glorious; that though Britain is a great country and we must be proud of it and be worthy of it we must be friends with people of other countries. And we learn, too, that even above our country we have a loyalty—not to any man but to God: it is He whom we must obey. Because of that—because we know His commands—we try not to hate but to love everyone. We learn not to frighten and bully people into serving us, but to serve everyone, for Christ's sake.

Will you remember that hundreds of thousands of men and women died to save you from the kind of training these German boys received?

Will you just think over, then, how very fine the youth organization is that you belong to—whichever it is—and give your thanks to the men who died by giving the most you have to it in strength of mind, in time, and keenness, and by learning everything it teaches as fully as you possibly can?

---

## The Christian Year

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

### The Scandal of the Debt-collecting Mind

BY THE REVEREND ARTHUR A. COWAN, D.D., EDINBURGH

Matthew $18^{22-35}$.

Our Lord records the downfall of a man who had been saved from an ugly fate by an astonishing mercy but did not imitate the mercy to which he owed everything and remained merciless in demanding his due.

Kipling has a grim story about Mary Postgate, an elderly governess with a maternal passion for her pupil who was killed in the First World War. While her disappointed love was destroying the boyish possessions he had left behind she had an opportunity of saving the life of a wounded German airman after a bombing raid on the village. But she exulted in letting him die to revenge herself on those who had robbed her of her special happiness. That is the scandal of the debt-collecting mind, the unforgiving sense of grievance, which gives no quarter but tries to compensate itself by taking the utmost out of all and sundry. Yet Mary Postgate owed her safety to the chivalry of men who were fighting for mercy and fairplay as her beloved pupil had fought. But she refused to learn its lesson and put it into practice. She did not reflect that the disabled German airman might be the only joy of some elderly woman like herself, and if she had spared him she would have found healing for her wounded spirit and experienced the peace of God. But all the unhappy woman cared about was to reimburse herself for her loss.

Notice, however, that the exorbitant man in the parable had not been hard hit but handsomely treated. The most exacting people are not usually those who have had a bad time, for they often have a soft side for others who are down, but those who have had a good time. They have defective sympathies. A man may owe more to favourable circumstances than any one can owe to him, but let any one offend him and he may be implacable. Is he savagely eager to get his own back, though so much has been given him and so many faults have been forgiven, and does he never rest till he has got even with any one who has crossed him? Then that is the scandal of the debt-collecting mind, for we are all beneficiaries of the Divine mercy, which is the deliverance we rely upon, but which is outraged when we are merciless to others.

Jesus tells here of a Government official who was generously treated by the Crown after he had mishandled large revenues, but this did not move him to generous dealings with equals and underlings. The accounts of his administration showed a deficit of over two million pounds, which was more than the income of several provinces. The missing State moneys made an unpayable debt, due either to dishonesty or mismanagement, and he was liable to be sold with his wife and children into slavery. That seems a harsh penalty, but modern Governments are not always lenient to an official whose guilt has been nothing worse than negligence. Two years ago, an absent-minded professor left in a tramcar examination papers for the whole of Italy and they were never recovered; as a result the Italian Government had to pay about £13,000 for making new arrangements, and the professor himself was fined £2,200. It was for him a costly lapse into forgetfulness. What then could the State official in our parable expect when he had impoverished the national exchequer to the tune of over two million pounds? But he

appealed to the King's mercy, and the King's heart was so touched that he did not even impose a fine but let him off. The debt was cancelled. It was a magnanimous surprise, a King's grace, and it is Jesus' picture of the magnificence of God's forgiveness of the unworthy.

A man may imagine that, because he is a well-doing average, with a respectable record, he does not need God's forgiveness. C. S. Lewis quotes a dying gamekeeper who, on being urged to make his peace with God, asked in surprise, 'Why, what harm have I done Him?' Well, we harm God if we do nothing to promote His saving purpose and insult Him with indifference which cannot be bothered. A careless unconcern about the claims of His Kingdom slows down many of His redeeming enterprises and runs up a huge bill of losses to God and man. Yet all this colossal debt, which has sabotaged His interests and wasted rich possibilities of improvement, God forgives, and is ready to retrieve. Such is His amazing mercy, and it should never cease to be breath-taking, for the forgiveness of sins cost God the agony and horror of His Son's crucifixion.

The parable proceeds from the sublime to the shocking, and tells how the King's grace was affronted and abused. The servant of the State had not the decency to absolve a poor soul who owed him a paltry debt of five pounds, but was quite brutal, and in spite of his entreaties sent him to gaol. This scandal of the debt-collecting mind caused such a sensation that it was publicly reported. The King was so indignant at one who had been so exonerated presuming to be so extortionate that he retracted his forgiveness. 'So will My heavenly Father do unto you,' says our Lord, 'if ye forgive not men their trespasses.' The unfeeling wretch was 'delivered to the tormentors.' 'The tormentors' suggest the hell a man makes for himself when he forgets how fortunate he has been in having many allowances made for him and harbours a fierce grudge against others. An unforgiving spirit punishes itself terribly. Arthur Koestler in his novel, *Thieves in the Night*, puts the confession into the mouth of Joseph the Jew: 'I have experienced that the desire for revenge may become a physical yearning like thirst; but its consummation is like drinking salt water; some men adrift on the sea go on drinking it till they lose their reason.' Such is the self-torture of those who cannot forgive, and it produces an unbalanced judgment, sometimes even a crazed mentality. The debt-collecting mind is a danger to itself as well as to others.

This official who remained exorbitant after great benefits received engineered his own downfall unawares. Do unforgiving people realize that they are degrading themselves? Luther said, 'My soul is too glad and too great to be at heart the enemy of any man.' God has cancelled the overwhelming arrears of erring mortals like us by giving His dear Son to die for our sake, and this should make us so happy and should be such a joyous release that we could never lower ourselves by anything so ungrateful and irreverent as grasping rancour. The Christian conscience recognizes that the debt-collecting mind is a scandal, thankless impudence to a regnant Love which has put us all under an infinite obligation.

Our Lord declared that the Divine forgiveness takes effect only when we are forgiving. 'Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.' The brooding malice which hunts for repayment of some offence obstructs God's forgiving love in our own life and the life of those we refuse to forgive. It blocks the progress of His mercy, which we are meant to mediate to other hearts, and denies His pardon a right of way through us. It says to God: 'Stop! you are not going to walk through my life!' Thus we may shut out God, and that would be a deadly downfall.

You see, one may enjoy the forgiveness of sins as a comforting experience, which ends distress of mind.

> Happy day! happy day!
> When Jesus washed my sins away.

Yes, indeed! But that self-commitment to the forgiving God proves itself unreal if there is no welcome for God's forgiveness as a commanding example. His intention is that His reconciling mercy should echo and reverberate through our human contacts, and that we should love others as He has loved us. According to Brunner, 'God does not desire our service for Himself but for humanity. When a man turns to Him and desires to serve Him, God directs his attention to the world and its need.' Just so! and the clamant need of the modern world which is snarling with rapacity and ill-will is a resolute friendliness. We show our gratitude to God by loving our neighbours. We praise Him by refusing to descend to hatred and maintaining a steady goodwill.

---

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

## Hidden Compartments

BY THE REVEREND J. ITHEL JONES, M.A., B.D., LONDON

'And Solomon brought up the daughter of Pharaoh out of the city of David unto the house that he had built for her: for he said, My wife shall not dwell in the house of David king of Israel, because the places are holy, whereunto the ark of the Lord hath come.'—2 Ch $8^{11}$.

This man had contracted what I can only call a wicked marriage. The interesting thing is that he

tried to cover it up and comfort himself by saying, 'It shall not make any difference to my religion.' They always say that.

He had married the King of Egypt's daughter. It was a political move; the kind of thing we read about in our history books. Marriage alliances were quite the thing when the balance of power in Europe was somewhat precarious.

I heard a young man from the Gold Coast tell that his father, a chief of some kind, when he opened up a new plantation, instead of merely appointing a bailiff, would take to himself a wife in that region. Similarly, here, Solomon had an eye to business. He ought never to have married the woman. The treaty was wrong in the first place anyway.

Note how he intends to ward off the spiritual danger. He will build this woman a house away from Jerusalem, the city of God. This is how he thinks he will prevent the marriage affecting his religion.

Now, I am not so concerned at the moment with marriage; but rather with this man's attempt to shut off a part of his life in a compartment away from his religion. Though, let me say in passing, that this does apply, of course, to marriage. Man is called upon to make many great decisions in a lifetime. Few, if any, can be so momentous as this. It often happens that by this a man's life is made or marred. Of course, Paul lays it down categorically that Christians must not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. That means, in plain English, that Christians should marry only Christians. I would say this: when I stand to unite two people in the sacred covenant of marriage, it is a tremendous relief when I can say to them, 'You are both Christians,' and proceed to admonish them from that point. Let us not gull ourselves into thinking that this does not matter. Of course, if marriage is something only on a physical level, it does not matter. But if marriage is, as we believe it to be, a spiritual relationship, how can it become what God intended it to be, if there is no unity in the secret place of His presence?

Solomon thought it would be all right. 'I'll manage very well,' he said. 'The marriage shan't make any difference to my religion.' But do you know what really happened? 'For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods. . . . For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom. the abomination of the Ammonites. . . . Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods.'

When young people reach that stage of life where this decision faces them, it is quite outside the province of ministers to lay down rules. Life does not fit into rules anyhow. But how reassuring it is when God is consulted and His guidance and presence sought. Life at that stage is so turbulent and fitful and it is so easy for the wrong step to be taken.

Now all this is in a kind of parenthesis. What I am concerned about primarily is the principle of which this is just an illustration: that a man can shut off a section of his life.

Men can do it with their business and professional life. I was astonished the other day when engaging in conversation with a business man and discussing certain practices which were manifestly wrong to hear him say, 'But business is business, and you've got to do it. But,' he went on (and this was the shocking thing), 'don't worry, I'll still be a good churchman!' Now, this is a free country and I suppose that within limits that man could do just as he liked. But he was surely denying his churchmanship in adopting that kind of attitude.

One of the impressive and encouraging things about the younger element in our congregations to-day is that they show by their questions that they are not satisfied with an attitude of this kind. I have questions put to me, to some of which I don't know the complete answer. But I am willing to suffer the embarrassment of not knowing the answer for the joy of realising that these people are seriously grappling with the problem of bringing their business and their religious profession together. They believe with Zechariah that holiness unto the Lord must be written on the bells of the horses. Let us not think that we can live in peace by pushing our business over there, far enough away from our religion. Let us remember Solomon and how his country's religion was in peril of being overthrown because of this dichotomy which he adopted.

People can keep it up so long. The Pharisees did pretty well. They devoured widows' houses and kept on praying long prayers. They probably said, 'The rents we charge have nothing to do with religion. Religion is an affair of the soul with God. Rent is a matter between our tenants and ourselves.' It is Solomon's wife all over again. Pack her into a house far enough away from Jerusalem and it will be all right!

Some try and do it with their politics. But if people like F. D. Maurice, John Clifford and George MacLeod have not laboured in vain, we should be convinced how utterly impossible it is to do this. We are not foolish enough to think

that we can bring in the Kingdom of God by political means. That is not the point. But we have to get back to that place where the political life of our nation is brought under the judgment of the religious conscience. What is morally wrong cannot be politically sound, and the nation that seeks to build her house of politics far away from the House of God is undermining not only her politics but her religious life also. That surely is part of the message of a man like Jeremiah. The politics and the religious life of a nation must not be kept apart. It is a warning against the folly of this supposedly wisest man in the world, who thought he could cover up a wrong relationship by saying, 'It is not concerned with religion.'

The sum of it all is, then, that there can be no schism in the life of the believer. All his activities and relationships must be governed by the spiritual principle. If He is not Lord of all, He is not Lord at all.

---

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

## Remembrance Day

BY THE REVEREND JOHN R. GRAY,
V.R.D., B.D., TH.M., GLASGOW

'He died for all.'—2 Co $5^{15}$.

This is Remembrance Day. We are met to remember. For some of us that will not be hard. They were our friends who died. We saw them do it. But this day belongs not only to us, but also to those—and they are now many—who cannot themselves remember much of even the more recent War. But those who died were of their race and kin; were, in metaphor, if not in actual fact, their fathers that begat them. Although both Wars may now have passed into history, remembrance of them has not lost its point, and will not. History, after all, is our story, the record of how we became what now we are. That is why Remembrance Day should not be turned into Peace Day or United Nations Sunday. Of course, with war clouds still hanging heavy over the world, we need, or should need, no bidding to pray for peace. Of course, as Christian people, we shall back up every effort to avoid bloodshed. But this day belongs to those who went before us, to those who are no more, to those—and let us use the familiar words without apology—to those who made the Supreme Sacrifice. Don't ever doubt that it was a sacrifice. Is life good? Have we who survived the Wars had happy days since they ended—and rich, rewarding experiences? That happiness, those experiences they sacrificed while their youthful zest for life was yet unblunted.

Blow out, you bugles, over the rich Dead!
There's none of these so lonely and poor of old,
But, dying, has made us rarer gifts than gold.
These laid the world away; poured out the red
Sweet wine of youth; gave up the years to be
Of work and joy, and that unhoped serene,
That men call age; and those who would have been,
Their sons, they gave, their immortality.

No doubt God had His own compensations ready for them on the other side: but they saw that other side no more than we. They gave all that they saw, all there was for them to give, their lives. So—let us remember them.

2. Ah yes, you say, but is there not a danger of being sentimental about those who died, of suggesting that they were all heroes and martyrs? Certain it is that they themselves never thought of themselves in that sort of way. In making their sacrifice they felt that they were only doing the plain, obvious, natural thing—their duty. In a way that is what it was. Sacrifice is not an exceptional occurrence in Nature. It is part of it. 'Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die,' said our Lord, 'it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.' Each living thing is born painfully, and grows at the expense of some other. Animals must eat other animals or plants to survive, and they in turn must often sacrifice themselves for the sake of their own offspring. A rabbit will attack a cat in defence of her young. A sheep will stand up to an eagle to protect her lambs. A bird will do her best to draw the attention of her enemies away from her fledgelings to herself. If we can thus trace the principle of sacrifice for others throughout all Nature, why should we to-day remember and greatly honour those who died in war for their fellows? Most of us will feel that there is a real distinction, a vast difference, but what is it? Is it this? Is a sacrifice perhaps worthy of honour in the degree in which it is made for those remote from the person who makes it? It is no hardship for me to sacrifice a night's sleep for my own child. I do not much complain if I lose a night's sleep for a sick friend or one of my own parishioners. I should be reluctant to do as much for a mere acquaintance, and normally refuse to do so for a perfect stranger. It is, in fact, easy to sacrifice for some one who is close to us. It becomes progressively more difficult—and more admirable—the less familiar the persons are.

So with those whom to-day we honour. Home meant much to them, and family, but in no real sense were they fighting directly for these dear,

familiar things. They gave their lives for their country and for their country's cause; for men and women whom they had never seen, for those who were not even born. Most of them had seen hardly any of their native land, and knew only a handful of its inhabitants. Some of them had not fared very well at their country's hands, had been born perhaps during an earlier war or its aftermath and been brought up in a noisome slum. Yet there was, it seemed to them, that in their native land which was worth defending, even with the sacrifice of their lives. That sacrifice we accept anew to-day, humbly and gratefully, seeking strength to be worthy of it.

3. It is a fine and honourable thing to die for one's country. Indeed it is. Only one sacrifice out-tops it—that of Him who died for the whole world. He—Christ—died for all. He gave all that even He had to give, and excluded none from its benefits who would receive them. There is a certain truth in Universalism. If Christ included me in the benefits of His passion and death, and that without any deserving on my part, how can any be excluded? It is certain that as death approached, the thought of the whole world was more and more in our Saviour's thoughts, and the love of all men ever more obviously in His heart. Always when the Church has been truest to itself and that means truest to Christ, it has reached out most longingly to the ends of the earth. That is its obvious duty, for 'He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.' Only conceit can imagine that Christ died for a clique or a coterie. The lonely agony and bitterness of Calvary were borne not for the great-hearted Peter only or for the beloved John, but equally and also for Caiaphas and Pilate and Herod, and surely for Judas too. This is the wonder of the Cross. He died for all. 'Scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die, but God commended his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' That is why Christ's kingdom has no end. His sacrifice has no limit. That is why none can ever go beyond Him or make His work of none effect. He died for all. No one is excluded or neglected or forgotten. There is no work left for any other saviour to do.

That is why the highest honour we can do to our fellows who died in battle is to see in their sacrifice some reflection of the sacrifice of Christ, and to set up as their memorial the replica of His Cross. That is why, this Remembrance Day, we should dedicate ourselves anew, not to class or party, nor even to nation and commonwealth, but rather to Him in whom there is no East or West, no black or white, no border, breed or birth; to Him of whose love and Kingdom there is no end or limit; to Him who died for all. To live in His service will lead us on to an ever purer love and to an ever widening charity. It cannot help but do so, for it is only because we know that He died for all that we can believe that He died for you and me.

---

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

## On Appropriating the Gospel

BY THE REVEREND RODERICK BETHUNE, M.A., EDINBURGH

'According to my gospel.'—Ro $2^{16}$.

These words might well suggest to the casual reader that Paul proclaimed a gospel which was either the result of his own patient, personal inquiry or else which was his quite peculiarly personal and novel interpretation of the gospel of the Lord he professed to serve.

Is that what his words mean?

1. An examination of the corpus of his writings makes it clear that Paul felt himself called to proclaim a given gospel which no man, not even he, had any right to alter either by subtracting from it or by adding to it. Indeed, he claimed on more than one occasion that what he preached was precisely the message which all his Christian colleagues preached, something which was not the outcome of any individual's or of any group's patient inquiry, but which was believed from the beginning. 'I delivered unto you first of all,' he wrote to the Corinthians, 'that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.'

In that respect Paul was no different from his counterparts in this day and generation. In many churches, including the Church of Scotland, the entrance of the minister is preceded by the entrance of the church officer bearing the Bible. Which act is highly symbolic. A minister is in a pulpit to interpret and to expound a given message, that which was believed from the beginning, something which is not the result of men's patient inquiry but something given them by God in Jesus Christ.

'There is no "other gospel," as Paul so emphatically declared,' says Professor C. H. Dodd. 'The Church may in its teaching rightly draw material from the changing experience and ideas of men throughout the centuries. It may use material to illustrate and enforce the preaching

of the Gospel. But the Gospel itself can never be other than it was at the beginning.' No one understood that more clearly than did St. Paul.

2. The chapter in which the words 'according to my gospel' occur contains notes of an address which Paul delivered to a company of Jews and which, when he wrote to the Corinthians, he decided to incorporate in his letter. He had been at some pains, apparently, to reveal the differences between the Jewish faith and the Christian faith, between the faith which he had once held and that which he now held. When he had referred to the Christian gospel he had spoken of it, quite naturally, as 'my gospel,' the gospel with which he was, and with which the Jews knew him to be, identified and which, in so many respects, was so different from that which they believed.

But the words were used, it seems clear, not simply to impress upon the Jews that he was now identified with the Christian gospel, but that he held it as a personal conviction, as a personal possession. That such an interpretation of his words is justified is proved by his own declarations. He who said, 'God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us,' also said, 'The son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.'

3. Have we realised that what Paul did in personally appropriating the message of the gospel is precisely what we are all invited to do?

God in Jesus Christ did something for the world. That is the objective truth. But God, in doing something for the world, did something for individuals and when the objective truth becomes subjectively real a transformation takes place.

In this connexion Bishop Nygren, the distinguished Swedish theologian, has something pertinent to say in the course of a series of pastoral letters which he addressed to his clergy. 'When it is said that the Gospel is a message addressed to us,' he writes, 'all too often we merely accept this word "message" without considering seriously what it is to which this word seeks to give expression. For simple and natural reasons, our whole attitude toward the Gospel is such that we find it very difficult to grasp the thought expressed in the word "message" when it is used of the Gospel. If word comes to me that a friend, who I feared had been killed in a traffic accident, has been rescued, I have no difficulty in interpreting that word as a message. To be sure, seen from one side it is an objective and timeless truth which is thereby conveyed to me. But for me this same truth has the significance of a personal message. And,' continues Dr. Nygren, 'it ought to be the same with the Gospel.' 'God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' That is an objective and timeless truth. 'The Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.' That is the personal message which that objective and timeless truth should have for me. Driving his point home, Bishop Nygren cites an illustration from another area of human experience. During the late World War various countries, including Denmark and Norway, were invaded by usurping powers. 'But then one day in May, 1945,' writes Bishop Nygren, 'came the message, "Denmark is free!" "Norway is free!" . . . A power stronger than the occupying powers had come, and had delivered them of their dominion. That was the objective thing which had taken place. But—and this is the other no less important side of the matter—at the same time a stupendous transformation of each individual's subjective situation had taken place.' But the individual had to take action. Concealed in hiding for so long for fear of enemies, his country's and his own, he could, and, if he were wise, did, accept the fact of his deliverance and, rejoicing in his new-found freedom, turn his back forever upon the place of his enforced concealment. So it is with the gospel which is at once a message to the world and to the individual. 'God has acted through Christ. If I believe, then I have deliverance. If I do not believe, then I do not have it.'

4. Have we believed in the sense in which Paul believed? Do we speak, as he did, of 'my gospel,' meaning by that that, so far as we are concerned, it is a personal conviction, a message which we have accepted as though it were spoken to us alone?

How easy it is to preach, and to listen to, sermons on the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, the Ascension, and all the while to regard them as objective events which have taken place, and nothing else. But that is to miss something vital. As a result of these great objective events a stupendous transformation of each individual's subjective situation has taken place. When, by faith, a man or woman realizes that, he is like a Norwegian, once concealed in hiding for fear of his enemies, to whom the news, not only of his country's deliverance, but of his own personal deliverance, makes all things new.

Let us accept the message of the gospel as a personal one, as one addressed as if to us alone, and two things happen—we begin to know the meaning of peace of mind and, because of the transformation which such peace of mind effects in us, we become what God wishes us to be, instruments in His hands, men and women who persuade others to seek and to find the truth as it is revealed in Jesus Christ.

# The Pauline Letters from Caesarea

By the Reverend Lewis Johnson, Shortwood Green, Nailsworth

A stichometrical analysis of the Book of Acts shows that the two final verses of ch. 28 are a displacement. For the shape of the Book is evidently a replica of Luke's Gospel which is a roll of ninety columns in three groups of thirty. But in Acts, while the first two groups of thirty columns are clear—the first ending with Peter's baptism of Gentiles ($11^{18}$) and the second with the close of Paul's missionary journeys when he lands at Caesarea ($21^{8}$), the third section has only twenty-four columns. The last three extant columns are $28^{1-10.\ 11-20.\ 21-29}$, leaving *vv.* 30–31 as an unattached fragment. They have evidently been inserted here in order to patch up a more or less plausible ending to the Book when the original closing pages had been lost, which surely would have recorded the trial and death of St. Paul. For the true position of *vv.* 30–31 is after $24^{26}$, where they fit pat both logically and stichometrically, thus: 'Felix commanded a centurion to keep Paul and let him have liberty . . . he hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him. And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house. . . . But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room. . . .'

Since, then, the supposed two years at Rome have no support from Luke's narrative, but on the contrary there is probability, almost to the point of certainty, that the lost pages at the end of Acts recorded the death of Paul within a short period after his arrival in Rome, it is out of the question that the Ephesian, Colossian, and Philippian Epistles could have been written from there. The natural place of their composition is Caesarea. And the same applies to 2 Timothy. What is the evidence?

Paul goes to Jerusalem for Pentecost (A.D. 58 according to Conybeare and Howson). And Ac $20^{4}$ tells us that he was accompanied 'into Asia' by Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timothy, Tychicus and Trophimus; and, of course, Luke.

Trophimus certainly went on to Jerusalem (Ac $21^{29}$), and so did Luke. And Aristarchus is still found with him two years later on the voyage to Rome ($27^{2}$). It seems probable, therefore, that the whole group in $20^{4}$ went on to Jerusalem. For Tychicus is the bearer of the Ephesian and Colossian letters; and Aristarchus 'my fellow-prisoner' joins in the greetings to Colossae. While Timothy is joint author of this Colossian letter.

Timothy also shares in the address to the Philippian letter. Let us look at this first. A certain Epaphroditus has brought a gift to Paul from the Church at Philippi, and this letter is sent to them in return. It is surely highly probable that the Philippi folk would send this gift to Paul as soon as they had news of his imprisonment at Caesarea. It is fantastic to suppose that they took no notice of this imprisonment, and only stirred themselves to help him more than two years later when he had arrived in Rome. For they would quite likely hear what had happened within a month or two of his arrest, and would have plenty of time to send Epaphroditus on his errand before navigation ceased about Michaelmas. Epaphroditus is sent back to them with this letter after having been laid up with a serious illness (Ph $2^{26-27}$), which the Philippians had had time to hear about before the letter is sent (*v.* 26). At the same time Paul hopes quite soon to send Timothy to them. The 'brethren that are with him'—surely the group, or some of them at least, of $20^{4}$—join in salutations. Also 'the saints . . . that are of Caesar's household,' which must, I take it, refer to the entourage of the Roman Governor at Caesarea. It is far more likely that there were Christians among these than in the imperial Palace at Rome—especially when one remembers that long before this Peter had baptized the household of a Roman centurion in Caesarea. Allowing considerable time for his illness it is hardly possible to suppose that Epaphroditus returned to Philippi before the shipping opened up again in the spring of A.D. 59. But Paul would certainly send off this letter at the earliest opportunity. I posit the early spring of 59 as its probable date.

Now look at the Colossian letter. Timothy is still with Paul and joins in this letter, though, as we have seen, Paul contemplated sending him to Philippi not long after Epaphroditus. Tychicus is the bearer of this letter, and the slave Onesimus goes with him. Probably it was the express need of writing to Philemon about the slave that caused Paul to write at the same time to the Colossian Church. The salutations in Colossians are from Aristarchus, Mark who is now with Paul but may be going to Colossae ($4^{10}$), Jesus Justus, Epaphras (who has come with news from Colossae

[$1^8$]), Luke and Demas. In the Philemon letter the salutations are from Epaphras, Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke. I suggest that these letters were written soon after that to Philippi, and would be sent off a little later in the spring or early summer.

Then we come to the Ephesian letter, in which Timothy does *not* join. It covers much the same ground as Colossians, but the treatment is somewhat fuller. The similarity of tone suggests that they are pretty well contemporaneous. And Tychicus is the bearer of this letter as well as the Colossian letter. But why does not Timothy join in it? Presumably because before its composition he has been despatched to Philippi as promised. The only likely reason for the omission of his name is that he was absent.

And now let us consider 2 Timothy. We suppose Timothy to have gone to Philippi in the early summer of A.D. 59. Paul had by then spent a winter in Caesarea without his cloak and books. In this letter he asks Timothy to bring them, urging him to come back if possible before winter, for he dreads a second winter without them. Now, in returning to Caesarea from Philippi, Timothy would naturally pass through Troas, and could pick up the goods and bring them along with him. But he would not necessarily pass through Troas en route to Rome, nor does it seem likely that he would.

I judge this letter to have been written later in this summer of 59. A good deal has been happening in this summer. Paul's friends have been scattering—naturally enough now that he was under arrest, though in pretty comfortable conditions; and they could do little good by remaining in Caesarea. Demas has gone to Thessalonica, Crescens to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with him. Aristarchus for some reason is not mentioned, though it seems probable that he was there since he is present again later on. He may, of course, have been temporarily absent, though as a 'fellowprisoner' it seems rather unlikely. Timothy is urged to bring back Mark with him, who had no doubt gone to Colossae as it was suggested he might do (Col $4^{10}$) and Timothy would know this since he had shared in the letter which makes this reference. The statement 'Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus' ($4^{12}$) with the Colossian and Philemon letters which Timothy knew all about, and with the Ephesian letter that was penned after Timothy had gone away, shows that though Timothy had shared in writing the two former Tychicus had not taken them before Timothy left. Paul could not have written this sentence otherwise. So that this reference, and the absence of Timothy's name in the address to Ephesians both point to the same conclusion.

Apparently Paul expects Timothy to pass through Ephesus on his journey, as he would do naturally enough if coming from Philippi to Caesarea, and could pick up Mark from near-by Colossae. So he is warned to beware of the notorious Alexander the coppersmith. And he is to give greetings to Prisca and Aquila and the household of Onesiphorus. The latter was an Ephesian, and Prisca and Aquila, although when last heard of were apparently at Corinth, had previously been at Ephesus and presumably were there again.

Then we have the news: Erastus remained at Corinth, but Trophimus I (or they) left at Miletus sick. The *ἀπέλιπον* of 2 Ti $4^{20}$ usually translated 'I left' may just as well be 'they left.' The 'I left' is quite impossible if this letter was written from Caesarea. But this news about Erastus and Trophimus comes immediately after the reference to Onesiphorus, and would be a very abrupt turn of thought if it did not link up with that. Now Onesiphorus had taken pains to visit Paul, but Paul refers to his visit as a past event. Onesiphorus had evidently gone away again, presumably back home to Ephesus. What more likely then that he and his party had left Trophimus sick at Miletus, and that Paul had had word sent him giving news of their return and mentioning this fact, and also that Erastus, for some reason or other, was staying in Corinth. Paul is just passing on these items of news to Timothy.

Finally, Eubulus, Pudens, Linus and Claudia send greetings—very likely names for members of Caesar's household to bear, *i.e.*, the entourage of Felix at Caesarea.

So far it seems to me that all is decisively clear for Caesarea as the place where these letters were written. And to clinch the matter the stichometry shows that the reference to Onesiphorus 'being in Rome' (2 Ti $1^{17}$) is a highly probable gloss. For the section in which it occurs has fifteen redundant letters, which are exactly accounted for by the *γενόμενος ἐν Ῥώμῃ*.

There remains the puzzling reference to 'my first defence' (2 Ti $4^{16}$). There had been a preliminary charge against Paul, led by the lawyer Tertullus, within a few days after his arrival at Caesarea, *i.e.*, in the early summer probably of A.D. 58 (Ac $24^{1ff.}$). But on that occasion Felix gave no judgment, but deferred the matter until 'Lysias the chief captain should come down' from Jerusalem. But Luke gives no account of this further examination, and from Acts one might suppose that it never took place. Luke, however, is only recording certain picked events of special significance, and if the examination when Lysias came had no other effect than Tertullus's first

effort, he might well pass it over. It would seem unlikely that Felix could afford to let a grave matter of this sort be neglected indefinitely, but he might get it postponed for a good while until the excitement had died down. And a hint to Lysias would suffice to delay his coming. It would be a pretty long delay indeed if this postponed examination were the 'first defence' that Paul refers to, for that would bring us probably to Easter A.D. 59 or even a little later—after Timothy had gone to Philippi. Yet we know that Felix had pecuniary motives for holding Paul in suspense. So that I see no likely solution of the problem of 2 Ti $4^{16}$ but to suppose that between the time of Timothy's departure to Philippi and the writing of Paul's letter to him urging his speedy return, there had been, after long delay, a further formal examination of Paul's case by Felix—a trial from which Paul emerged successful: 'I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.' But he still remains in custody—perhaps for his own protection as much as anything else. For he evidently considers his life to be hanging by a thread, either from Jewish plotting, or by a final verdict against him. In the letter to the Philippians he is facing his chances of life or death; and while he writes as reassuringly as he can about seeing his friends again still he warns them that he may be offered up as a sacrifice, and he declares that it is not grievous to himself to say this, but it is safe for them to be warned. But now—probably some three or four months later—his conviction that his end is drawing near is quite settled, as the magnificent verses $4^{6-8}$ show. He has emerged successfully from his first defence, but that was evidently not the final settlement of the matter. This is quite clear from Ac 25, which represents Festus reopening the examination as one of his first duties on taking over the Governorship from Felix. By that time Paul had made up his mind for the last desperate move—the appeal to Caesar. And to Caesar he went, and to death.

# Contributions and Comments

## A Note on 1 Corinthians ii. 8

It is remarkable how many commentators take the words 'the rulers of this world' to mean spirit powers. This may be superficially attractive, but on several grounds 'human rulers' is the more probable sense.

1. *New Testament Usage.* The word ἄρχων occurs thirty-five times in the New Testament (apart from 1 Co 2). Twenty-six of these are clearly references to human rulers; eight refer to a demonic power; and Rev $1^{5}$ is in a class apart. The eight demonic references (Mt $9^{34}$ $12^{24}$, Mk $3^{22}$, Lk $11^{15}$, Jn $12^{31}$ $14^{30}$ $16^{11}$, Eph $2^{2}$) are all singular. Leaving aside 1 Co 2 there is no evidence in the New Testament for the plural of ἄρχων having a demonic significance.

On the other hand, however, where the plural form is used, the reference is always plainly to human rulers. There are sixteen such instances. Of these thirteen are allusions to those Jewish leaders who were involved in the death of Jesus. In seven out of these thirteen references their part in the Crucifixion is in fact explicitly emphasized (Lk $23^{14}$ $23^{35}$ $24^{20}$, Ac $3^{17}$ $4^{8}$ $4^{26}$ $13^{27}$). Here, quite plainly are 'the rulers' who 'crucified the Lord of glory.'

2. *An Old Testament Basis.* In Ac $4^{26}$ the word ἄρχων occurs in the context of a quotation from Ps 2: 'the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Anointed.' They did so, according to the Psalmist, because they were devoid of wisdom (*v.* 10). So when St. Paul speaks of the rulers of this world who crucified the Lord of glory, because they *knew not God's wisdom*, the probability is that this familiar Psalm is the background to his thought, rather than Gnostic mythology (so Bultmann), and, therefore, that he means earthly rulers.

3. *This agrees better with primitive Christian thought*, as reflected, for example, in Mark. The Satanic powers know well who Jesus is; it is men who are ignorant. The evil powers, recognizing the Divine spirit at work, are provoked into using men to bring about the destruction of the Son of God. If we are balancing probabilities, it seems more likely that St. Paul's view would approximate to the primitive Christian than to that of Gnostic mythology: he would not say that it was the spirit powers who were ignorant of what was happening at the Crucifixion.

The theological importance of the point is this: if, as seems to me more likely, St. Paul here means earthly rulers, this constitutes a point of Pauline teaching about human nature. He is implying that the natural man is blind to the ultimate character of his worldly activities. The death of the Son of God reveals uniquely what otherwise would be hidden from us, namely, the ultimate effect of the ordinary actions of the natural man in his normal response to the pressures of the world.

Trevor Ling

*London*

## Mark xiv. 54

THE Authorized Version, Revised Version, Moffatt's and Goodspeed's translations of the New Testament render *πρὸς τὸ φῶς* of Mk 14[54] 'at the fire.' This translation has been approved by Moulton and Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, 680; C. H. Turner, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 72; and C. C. Torrey, *The Four Gospels*, 104. W. C. Allen, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 178, renders *πρὸς τὸ φῶς* 'at the blaze.'

However, some scholars have found it difficult to overlook the fact that *φῶς* means 'light' rather than 'fire.' E. P. Gould, *The Gospel According to Mark* (*ICC*), 277–78, renders this phrase, 'at the light of the fire.' In harmony with the American Standard Version, A. E. J. Rawlinson, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 216, puts it 'in the light *of the fire*.' His comment (p. 221) is: 'The last three words do not represent anything which appears in Greek. The word *light* here stands for "fire" as in the Greek of 1 Macc. xii. 29.' Both M.-J. Lagrange, *Évangile selon Saint Marc*, 372, and H. B. Swete, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 335, point out the fact that Mark is the only Gospel writer who mentions light. Swete said that Peter was 'forgetful that the blaze lit up his features.' V. Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 565, said, 'But while in late Gk. *φῶς* is used in the sense of *πῦρ* (Xen. *Cyr.* vii. 5, 27, 1 Macc. xii. 28 f.) it carried with it the idea of illumination.'

If this passage were considered a Greek translation of a Semitic original, the reason for the difficulty seems obvious. The Semitic אור is usually pointed אוֹר and means 'light.' This would be rendered by the Greek *φῶς*. However, אור may also be pointed אוּר and mean 'flame' or 'fire' (see Is 31[9] 44[16] 47[14] 50[11], Ezk 5[2]). A translator working with an unpointed text might easily have taken אור to be אוֹר instead of אוּר which is found no more than five times in the entire Old Testament.[1]

Further indications of a Semitic original are seen in the two periphrastic imperfect constructions in the same sentence and the preceding clause (14[53b]) which begins with a verb.

If this hypothesis is correct, translators and commentators are fully justified in rendering *πρὸς τὸ φῶς*' at the fire.'

GEORGE WESLEY BUCHANAN

*Towaco, New Jersey, U.S.A.*

[1] Probably only four. The occurrence in Is 50[11b]: לְכוּ בְּאוּר אֶשְׁכֶם is rendered by the LXX *πορεύεσθε τῷ φωτὶ τοῦ πυρὸς* and is probably erroneously pointed. This illustrates the ease with which this error could be made.

## A Note on *υἱὸς θεοῦ* (Mark xv. 39)

THE centurion's confession *Ἀληθῶς οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος υἱὸς θεοῦ ἦν* (Mk 15[39]=Mt 27[54]) has been understood (1) as an admission that the dying man on the Cross was an extraordinary man, a hero, and (2) as a Christian confession of faith in Jesus as the Son of God.

Gould may be quoted as a representative of the former view, adopted by many expositors and commentators: '*a son of God*, a hero after the heathen conception.'[2] This interpretation is usually buttressed by two arguments: (1) the phrase *υἱὸς θεοῦ* is anarthrous, requiring therefore the indefinite sense of 'a son of God';[3] (2) Luke understood the confession as nothing more than an exclamation of wonder and admiration for the dying man, thus transforming it into *Ὄντως ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὗτος δίκαιος ἦν* (Lk 23[47]).[4]

The first argument would appear to have been decisively settled by E. C. Colwell in his article, 'A Definite Rule for the Use of the Article in the Greek New Testament.'[5] His conclusion may be summarized in his own words: 'A definite predicate nominative has the article when it follows the verb; it does not have the article when it precedes the verb.'[6]

The phrase *υἱὸς* [*τοῦ*] *θεοῦ* appears as an anarthrous predicate nominative in ten passages, in nine of which it precedes the verb (Mt 4[3. 6]= Lk 4[3. 9]; Mt 14[33] 27[40]; Mk 15[39]=Mt 27[54]; Jn 10[36]);[7] the other passage (Mt 27[43]) may be only an apparent exception since *θεοῦ* here precedes the verb.

In his chapter on the definite article, Moule calls attention to Colwell's rule and concludes that the omission of the article in the centurion's confession does not necessitate the translation 'a *Son of God*.'[8] R. H. Lightfoot, in the Bampton Lectures for 1934, had made the same observation: 'The absence of the Greek article from the two substantives is no difficulty . . . The article may be omitted here as at Mt 14[33], because the expression is a predicate.'[9]

[2] *Commentary on Mark* (*I.C.C.*), 295; cf. also A. B. Bruce, *The Synoptic Gospels*, in *Expositor's Greek Testament*, 333; H. B. Swete, *Commentary on Mark*, 366.

[3] Cf. A. W. F. Blunt, *St. Mark* (*The Clarendon Bible*), 263 f.

[4] Cf. A. Carr, *St. Matthew* (*Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools and Colleges*), 312.

[5] *Journal of Biblical Literature*, lii. [1933], 12–21.

[6] *Op. cit.*, 13.

[7] Cf. also Jn 19[7]: *ὅτι υἱὸν θεοῦ ἑαυτὸν ἐποίησεν*; Lk 1[32]: *υἱὸς Ὑψίστου κληθήσεται*.

[8] C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom-Book of New Testament Greek*, 115 f.

[9] R. H. Lightfoot, *History and Interpretation in the Gospels*, 85, n. 2.

On purely grammatical grounds, therefore, it may safely be concluded that the centurion's confession need not be made to bear an indefinite sense, but may be understood in a definite manner, '*the* Son of God.' This is a purely negative conclusion, but opens the way for an affirmative statement.

The second argument has to do with Luke's use of the Marcan narrative at this point. Matthew modifies considerably the Marcan passage (1) by placing the confession in the mouth not only of the centurion but of the soldiers as well (*ὁ δὲ ἑκατόνταρχος καὶ οἱ μετ' αὐτοῦ*), and (2) by making it the result, not of Jesus' death (as in Mark) but of the earthquake and accompanying signs (*ἰδόντες τὸν σεισμὸν καὶ τὰ γινόμενα*). Still he conserves the confession as it appears in Mark with, presumably, the same meaning.

It is in the Third Gospel, however, that the words of the centurion have been radically altered; he confesses that Jesus was a just (or, innocent) man. On the one hand, it is argued that Luke did not agree with his source, and thus substituted the Marcan confession by one completely different. Such is Creed's explanation.[1] On the other hand, it is proposed that Luke understood *υἱὸς θεοῦ* to mean nothing more than *δίκαιος*. This, indeed, was Augustine's explanation: the centurion called Jesus the Son of God 'simply because he believed Him to be a righteous man as many righteous men have been named sons of God.'[2]

Are we to presume *a priori*, however, that Luke has correctly interpreted his source? It would not appear that he did.[3] Indeed one may ask, of what value and to what purpose would Mark have included in his closely-knit account of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God (1[1]) an admission on the part of a pagan Gentile that Jesus died an innocent man or, at the most, as a hero, an extraordinary man? Such an interpretation is to misread the Marcan Gospel which climaxes the Passion story with a Gentile's full-fledged confession of Jesus as the Son of God.[4]

It would appear, therefore, that those translations are in error which render the Matthaean and Marcan passages 'a son of God' (Moffatt, Goodspeed, Revised Standard Version[5]) and that Lightfoot is fully justified in his assertion that Mark means us to understand the centurion's statement as a Gentile confession of faith in Jesus as the Son of God: 'The words have the same full Christian meaning as at Mk 1[1].'[6]

ROBERT G. BRATCHER

*Chattanooga, Tenn.*

[1] J. M. Creed, *Commentary on Luke*, 288.

[2] Augustine, *De consensu evangelistarium*, iii. 20. Plummer agrees that the two expressions 'represent one and the same thought: "He was a good man, and quite right in calling God His Father"' (*Commentary on Luke* [*I.C.C.*], 539).

[3] Cf. Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, 88: 'To the third evangelist . . . the death of Jesus is a martyrdom.'

[4] Vincent Taylor admits that Mark regards the words as a Christian confession, but prefers to think that Luke's version 'is more primitive'—without explaining what is meant by that (*The Gospel according to St Mark*, 597).

[5] It is interesting to observe that R.S.V. always translates the anarthrous nominative predicate *υἱὸς θεοῦ* 'the Son of God' except in the centurion's confession (Mk 15[39] and parallel). Cf. also Lk 1[32], 'the Son of the Most High'; Jn 19[7], 'the Son of God.'

[6] *Op. cit.*, 85, n. 2.

## Numbers xiii. 32

ARABIC etymology clears up the seemingly contradictory statements in Nu 13[32]. The spies returning from Canaan, after saying, 'It is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof,' which is taken to mean that the people were weak and undernourished, go on to describe them as 'men of great stature.' The contradiction is resolved when we know that 'to eat' in this sort of context means to conquer. An Islamic tradition quoted in Muhit al Muhit runs: 'I was given orders concerning a town which eats all other towns, *i.e.* its inhabitants conquer all other towns and take spoil.' We must therefore render our text in Numbers thus: 'It is a conquering land'; the word 'inhabitants' was probably put in later as a gloss.

## The Black Arabs of the Jordan Valley

1 KINGS 17[6] tells of the 'ravens' which supplied Elijah with bread and flesh when he was hiding by the brook Kerith in East Jordan. It has been suggested that we should make a slight change in the vowel points and read Arabs instead of ravens. No such emendation is necessary since Arab scholiasts explain that the famous warrior poet ''Antar' was one of the Arab ravens, *i.e.*, one of the black Arabs called ravens. J. B. Buckingham in *Travels Among the Arab Tribes* [1824], 13, says: 'It is certainly a very marked peculiarity of the Arabs that inhabit this valley of the Jordan that they have flatter features, darker skin, and coarser hair than any other tribes; a peculiarity rather attributable, I conceive, to the constant and intense heat of that deep region, than to any other cause.'

MORRIS SIGEL SEALE

*Beirut*

# Recent Foreign Theology

**The Evildoers in the Psalms.** The problem of the evildoers in the Psalms, described in a variety of terms, has been much discussed, especially since Mowinckel advanced his view that the ' workers of iniquity ' were people who were believed to have put a spell on the persons who used the Psalms as a plea for deliverance from the spell. Some years ago Professor Birkeland, a colleague of Mowinckel's, advanced the view that all the varieties of evildoers were Gentile enemies of the Israelites, and that the speaker in the Psalms was either the nation or its representative. He has now returned to this theme, elaborating it and examining it in the light of subsequent discussions, and re-affirming it in stronger form than before.[1] He will allow that Israelites may sometimes be referred to by these terms, but only in so far as their co-operation with Gentiles is concerned. The ' righteous ' on the other hand, are Israelites *qua* Israelites. The reviewer is doubtful if this can really be sustained, though the vigour and skill with which the theory is presented must be recognized. It is hard to feel that ' righteous ' and ' wicked ' are always nationalistic terms. The enemies of the people of God were doubtless always thought of as evil-doers, and as against such external enemies the people of God could be thought of as ' righteous.' But surely the disloyal within the nation could be thought of as ' wicked,' whether they were allied to Gentiles or not. In the course of his work Birkeland deals some blows at the ' Myth and Ritual School,' and especially at its Swedish followers. This supposed ' school ' is rather nebulous, however, and not all its ' members ' would defend the positions which are attributed to the ' school.' The over-simplified view of their positions may be questioned perhaps as much as the over-simplified view of the evildoers in the Psalms, though in both respects there are shrewd observations which will make a contribution to the discussion of the issues.

---

**The Problem of Communication.** In the French series of *Cahiers Théologiques* R. Mehl considers in a short, but richly suggestive, monograph the problem of communication.[2] He first examines the nature of inter-human communication, which must be a two-way communication, and which can never be complete. It functions on a variety of levels, but always has some limitation, since there are depths of experience which cannot be shared. He considers the unique level of communication in marriage, and argues that monogamy is founded on the very nature of this communication. It cannot be shared with a third party, and mutual trust and jealousy belong essentially to it.

Next he considers the communication of the Christian message, which is more than the communication of teaching. It is the communication of the Word of God uttered in the living Person of Christ. The content of the Christian message is therefore the presence and power of God mediated in the living presence of Christ.

The treatment is throughout on the abstract level, and there is little reference to the passages of the New Testament which could powerfully reinforce its conclusions. Communication between man and God transcends inter-human communication, in that God alone can enter perfectly into the experience of any man, yet differs in that man can enter less fully into the Divine experience than he can enter into that of his fellow-man. Yet in so far as he is ' in Christ ' he may be lifted into the life and purpose of God, for the enrichment of his own life, and this communication must be a two-way communication, demanding of him as well as giving to him.

---

**The Psalter.** In 1950 the volume of the Jerusalem Bible devoted to the Psalms appeared. This has now appeared in a second edition, revised with the collaboration of J. Gelineau and Th. G. Chifflot.[3] In the preparation of the original edition R. Tournay and R. Schwab shared, and the latter contributes a chapter on the new edition, which differs quite considerably from the first edition. This is not merely to be seen in the fact that the book is some thirty pages longer than the first, but in that the translation—which is the most important part of all the volumes of this series—differs widely in form from that of the earlier volume. A good example is to be seen in Ps 1, which in the new edition reads :

> Heureux est l'homme, celui-là
> qui ne va pas au conseil des impies,
> ni dans la voie des égarés ne s'arrête,
> ni au banc des rieurs ne s'assied,
> mais se plaît dans la loi de Yahvé,
> mais murmure sa loi jour et nuit !

---

[1] *The Evildoers in the Book of Psalms* [1955]. Dybwad, Oslo.

[2] *La Rencontre d'autrui* (*Cahiers Théologiques*, No. 36) [1955]. Delachaux et Niestlé, Neuchâtel ; Swiss Fr. 4.

[3] *Les Psaumes*, 2nd ed. (*La Sainte Bible de Jérusalem*) [1955]. Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris ; Fr. 1200.

whereas the former edition had :

> Heureux l'homme qui ne procède pas
> selon les principes des impies,
> ni dans la voie des pécheurs ne se tient
> ni au conseil des moqueurs ne s'assied,
> mais se plaît dans la crainte de Yahvé
> et murmure sa loi jour et nuit !

The changes are not dictated by scholarship—which Professor Tournay has in full measure—but by considerations of style and rhythm. It is hard to see what is gained by ' mais ' instead of ' et ' in the last of the lines quoted above. The translation of the Psalms is particularly difficult, requiring high literary art as well as accurate knowledge, and the translators are to be congratulated on their desire to make their rendering more serviceable.

---

**Hebrews and the Catholic Epistles.** A volume of the Regensburg Roman Catholic commentary on the New Testament, which appeared in 1953, deserves mention here.[1] It contains O. Kuss's commentary on Hebrews and J. Michl's commentary on the Catholic Epistles. To each book there is a short Introduction, and the commentary is of the paragraph by paragraph, rather than the verse by verse, type. The text commented on is given in German translation, and the commentary alternates with the text instead of being placed under it. Its authors are acquainted with modern scholarly work, though their work is presented in a form suitable for study by laity as well as by clergy. In such a work one naturally does not look for great originality of view, but here we have sober scholarship presented in a form for serious study.

On the authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews the widely varying suggestions that have been made are reviewed one by one, but the commentator does not decide for any of them. He contents himself with describing in general terms the character of the unknown author so far as he can be discerned in his work. With some hesitation he thinks that the addressees were in Rome, and he assigns the work to a date between the closing years of the seventh and the early years of the last decade of the first century.

The authenticity of 2 Peter is given up, though its authority is guaranteed for the commentator by its canonicity, while the three Johannine Epistles are held to be by one and the same author, who is identified with the author of the Fourth Gospel.

[1] *Der Brief an die Hebräer und die Katholischen Briefe* (*Das Regenburger Neue Testament*, vol. 8) [1953]. Pustet, Regensburg ; DM. 10.00, or bound 12.00.

---

**Italian Introduction to the New Testament.** A very brief Introduction to the New Testament in Italian, by F. lo Bue, has its Preface written from Mansfield College, Oxford, and rests on a good acquaintance with modern scholarly work on the New Testament, including not a little in English.[2] It adopts no strikingly new positions, and, indeed, should not in a work on this scale designed for a wide circle of readers. After a chapter dealing with the historical and religious setting of the rise of Christianity—including a brief reference to the Dead Sea Scrolls, on which the author has published an article elsewhere—the Epistles of Paul are first dealt with, and then the Synoptic Gospels and the Acts, after which the Johannine writings are discussed, and then the Epistles of James, Peter, and Jude, followed by a short chapter on the Canon and Text of the New Testament. The book should be very useful in mediating to Italian Protestants the fruits of modern New Testament scholarship.

H. H. Rowley

*Manchester University.*

[2] *Che cosa è il Nuovo Testamento* [1954]. Libreria Editrice Claudiana, Torre Pellice ; Lire 500.

# Entre Nous

### A Revival of Religion

Has a revival of religion already begun, or are those who believe that it has merely suffering from wishful thinking ? The answer is not easy, for the wind still bloweth where it listeth as it did in Nicodemus' day, so that it is never easy so to speak to number and annotate those that are born of the Spirit. Yet there are signs, no one may be big in itself, but yet signs whose cumulative evidence seems to be at least impressive.

First think about church attendance. The forces of social convention, of the-done-thing, which used to send people to church hardly operate at all to-day. Yet on all sides we hear that congregations are increasing, not spectacularly but steadily, and in the past year or two with increasing momentum. Thus, all round, there are solid increases in the numbers of Easter communicants. There is a parallel increase in those confirmed, and in very many places a spectacular one in the case of adults. That surely means that large numbers of folk in early middle age have decided that there is a gap in their lives which only religion can fill. This, to me, is at least as significant as any of the signs of the times.

One swallow doesn't make a summer, but here is an actual personal experience of a city parish, almost entirely what is called 'working class.' Five years ago for the week night Service and Sermon in Lent I'd have looked on sixty as a fairly optimistic estimate of the size of the congregation. Intensive work over the years by the parochial clergy, backed by a remarkable teaching 'Mission' resulted in an average congregation each Wednesday evening this Lent of some two hundred—about twice as many as would have been there on a *Sunday* evening a decade or so ago. Another impressive fact about this new body of worshippers is its giving capacity, for its financial support of its church is on a scale which would, again looking back ten years, have been looked on as inconceivable. Surely all this adds up to something really significant.

Next look at reports from Oxford and Cambridge where, maybe, we saw the biggest slump. To-day not only is religion avidly discussed but church attendance among under-graduates has gone up by leaps and bounds. My earliest hopes in this direction date back six or seven years when the flame was first beginning to smoulder and lay in the statement by the Dean of a very famous College who said that five years or so previously those men in the College destined for Holy Orders were intellectually negligible, while at the time in which he was speaking they were to be numbered among the cream of the place. All that is reflected too in the number of men who are offering themselves as Ordination candidates, and not only in the number but also in the quality.

Again, a recent personal experience bears out general, informed opinion. Only a month or so ago a well-known Theological College was transferred bodily to the city of Coventry where it stayed a full week. The students were accommodated in various houses in three selected parishes. One was typical suburbia, the second a large working-class parish with a great tradition, while the third included a brand new and very raw housing area. The students listened to lectures on their job in the mornings and later visited all sorts of districts and took part in every kind of parochial activity. Reports both from lay hosts and parochial clergy were full of high appreciation. In the new housing area a man in his middle years was planted, ordained after half a life-time of service as a lay evangelist. He lives, as do his parishioners, in a new council house and has already made a deep mark. Of all the parishes it was here that the students were most impressed —as well as most impressive.

Nothing that has been written is conclusive, but surely here are a succession of pointers all leading to the same conclusion which is that there is a new awareness of religion, a new realization of how meaningless life can be without it.

Now let us move from inside the churches to the outside world. In the January number of this journal (lxvii. 115 ff.) detailed evidence was set out in regard to the activities of a Chaplain on the floor of a factory for a whole day each week. I am convinced that such an experiment would either have failed completely or been far more difficult if it had been attempted ten or fifteen years ago. More (and this did not appear in my original article as it was no part of its purpose), I am increasingly surprised by the number of men in the factory who *have* some definite connexion with organized religion. The figure usually given nation wide, is ten per cent. Certainly that is far too low in this particular case. Indeed, I believe that it might fairly safely be doubled.

Next let us look at another straw in the wind, this time in a definitely rural area in the shape of a very small and remote country town. A Religious Quiz was organized and a team of four, including a General Medical Practitioner, made a thirty-mile journey to answer questions. Men and women had come in from all over the countryside, a five-mile trip to get to the hall being quite common. The Town Hall was packed to overflowing and the meeting was only brought to an end because of the weariness of the Panel. As we put on our coats to go home an old man shook me by the hand. 'I'm a Methodist lay preacher,' he said. 'I was born here seventy years ago, and this is the biggest meeting I've ever seen in this Town Hall.'

Again, in a dozen or more inns of all sorts, at the invitation of the innkeeper, I've preached a short sermon and then spent an hour answering questions. Never have I met the slightest discourtesy, the faintest irreverence, but always the deepest interest and real friendliness. I've kept to the last what many would have put first, *i.e.* Billy Graham's amazing campaign. That is not in any way to belittle it but to record that the mass methods he adopts produce results which bear out my own personal experience of, shall I call them, intensive methods, as compared with his extensive, high pressure campaigns. If only because Billy Graham's are few and far between, as well as because his campaigns are so enormously expensive, we must look to the ordinary rank and file clergy and laity to do the job which cries aloud to be done. Once again it is true that the fields are white with harvest, and once again the labourers are few. So it is that once again we must pray the Lord of the Harvest for more labourers.

Does all this end with an appeal in all

denominations for more Ordination candidates? No. That, I believe, will come of itself when the wind of the spirit is really felt. I am convinced that the first step lies in a new view of the man-power already possessed by organized religion, and a fresh vision of how that man-power should be deployed, most especially the power of the religious layman.

Not long before he died I was talking to that beloved person, my late Bishop, Neville Gorton, telling him of a splendid congregation which assembled week by week in a certain church in our Diocese. 'Good,' said he. 'And where do we go from there?' That, surely, is a question that we not only have never answered, but even one which is rarely asked, 'Where do we go from there?'

If we go back to Apostolic times for an answer there can be no least doubt what that answer is, for our Lord chose twelve laymen to carry the torch after His Ascension. Have you ever noticed that there was not a priest among them? We of the churches have claimed all through my seventy odd years that we are working on His intensive system. We are, but the snag is that those to whom we minister His grace in the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments never even think that they are called on to act as first the Seventy and then the Twelve did. Church-going has become, so to speak, an end in itself, not the means to an end that it was always intended to be. Until we alter that we shall get nowhere, for however inspired, zealous, and active the clergy of all sects may be they are *far* too thinly spread to practise any other than the intensive system which has, so far, been a conspicuous failure.

What can our lay-folk *do*? First of all, witness by their lives to the power of the gospel by leading (in street and village, in country town and industrial city) in kindness, forbearance, generosity, and scrupulous honesty: by being tolerant in judgment, careful in tongue, always considering the other fellow. That alone could well accomplish a religious revolution. Next, they must witness by their speech in office and in workshop, in factory and school and club, making it clear that they are convinced members of the Christian Church. Again, our lay-folk must surely see to it that no religious work falls down because of lack of lay-helpers. It is so easy to be too busy when a job of work comes along which demands assiduous attention, week in, week out. If every one is too busy the work remains undone. I believe, here, that one great mistake, certainly in my own church, is to look to the layman to do unimportant odd jobs and to help us out of an acute emergency. I believe a new vision is developing—indeed I saw a perfect example in a half-country, half-suburban church as recently as Easter evening. With only the remnants of a voice I'd gone out to preach in a parish which has three churches, twenty-five thousand people, and two clergy. There was a National Serviceman on leave who read the Lessons. As soon as, in the vestry, it was seen that I could hardly croak, one of the choir volunteered to sing the Service. I accepted gratefully and turning with a grin to an older man said, 'What about you preaching? Then I *should* be right.' He smiled and answered, 'I did my stint when I preached on Good Friday.' It was clear that the laymen of that parish could carry on under their own steam, and why not? It may well be that we have not yet found an answer to the problem of what to do with the tiny country church and a parish of a few hundreds. Maybe the correct use of lay evangelists is part of that answer and not one man getting round three or four such parishes and taking one Service per Sunday—and that not necessarily at a convenient time.

Last of all is what we do with them when the lapsed come back to church. Will they understand our prayers, our lessons, our sermons, our hymns? Do we use words which mean nothing to them although much to us?—words like regeneration, justification by faith, salvation by the Cross, and so on? It may well be that we of the churches will have to learn a new vocabulary 'if by any means we can save some.' Again, it is very embarrassing for an adult not to be able to 'find his place' in church. To that there is a satisfactory answer. In all churches which, as mine does, use a set form of Service, let the pages of the Prayer Book be numbered, and the number announced on each occasion. Remember, too, that those in their twenties to thirties used new hymns at school. Be sure you, too, use those hymns, not indeed instead of, but as well as the old favourites.

For my last word I would plead that in your church you care for strangers. I *have* known churches which, God forgive them, gave the impression that a stranger was an unwanted interloper. So, remember that, having gone into the highways and hedges and compelled them to come in, the next step is that when they *do* come in they shall find a sense of the Presence of God.

E. Moore Darling

*Coventry*

Printed in Scotland by Morrison & Gibb Limited, Tanfield Works, and Published by T. & T. Clark, 38 George Street, Edinburgh. It is requested that all literary communications be addressed to The Editor, King's Gate, Aberdeen, Scotland.